NAAMAN
THE
SYRIAN
HIS
DISEASE
AND
CVRE.

Diſcovering lively to the Reader the ſpirituall Leproſie of Sinne and Selfe-love: Together with the Remedies, *viz.* Selfe-deniall and Faith.

Beſides ſundry other remarkable points of great uſe: as you may finde them after the Epiſtle to the Reader.

With an Alphabeticall TABLE, very neceſſary for the Readers underſtanding, to finde each ſeverall thing contained in this Booke.

By Daniel Rogers, *B. in Divinity, and Miniſter of Gods Word at Wethersf. in Eſſex.*

LONDON,
Printed by TH: HARPER for PHILIP NEVIL, and are be ſold at his Shop in Ivy Lane at the Signe of the Gun.
M DC XLII.

To The
RIGHT HONOVRABLE THE
Lady Cecil Counteſſe of *Winchelſey*, late Wife, and now Widow to the Right Honourable Thomas Earle of *Winchelſey* deceaſed, Grace and Peace.

Right Honourable:

THE graces of Selfe-deniall and Faith, are like thoſe two pillars of Iachin and Boaz, erected at the beautifull entrance into the Temple for all men to caſt their eyes upon, and that worthily; for moſt coſtly and pretious was their matter, and moſt curious and artificiall was their workemanſhip. For, as thoſe two Pillars led the way into a glorious Temple, yet made with hands; ſo doe theſe two ſtand in the porch of a better Temple, even that of Grace here, and Glory eternall in the heavens: And as they ſo ſtood neare the gate of entrance that no man could enter in, ſave by them, although themſelves never went in but alway ſtaid without; ſo theſe graces though they ſhall leave the ſoule in Heaven, becauſe ſhe ſhould not need them, yet they ſhall not forſake her while ſhe abides in the porch, but ſhut heaven doore upon her ere they take their leave. Moreover as the contriver and erecter of the former was that famous and cunning Artiſt, Hyram of Tyre: ſo, no leſſe an artificer then Hyram (nay a greater then Hyram is here) I ſay, the Spirit of the Lord Ieſus is the framer and ſetter up of theſe in the Soules of Gods Elect. And theſe two graces (good Madam) with the diſcovery thereof, are the chiefe frame of theſe my enſuing Lectures; in which, both when I preached them, and now I write them, I aime at this marke, to withdraw the ſoule from the life of it owne hand, to the life of the Lord Ieſus, and from an empty

2 Chron. 3. 17.

1 King. 7. 13.

Eſay 57. 9.

1085698

empty Religion to be acquainted with the mysteries of the Gospell, the only manuduction to true godlinesse. All profession being nothing else, save a shadow, and bottomlesse building, which is not grounded and quickned with Selfe-deniall and Faith.

And indeed (Right Honourable) *if ever any age of the Church did, then doth this in which we live, in my judgement, require that the labours of us Ministers, be improved about the urging of these; whether we looke upon the times, or turne our eyes to God himselfe in his administration and government; we shall observe the former excessively overgrowne with an outward and formall Religion; and for the latter, when did the Lord so estrange himself from us, and dwell as it were, in the midst of a thicke cloud: So that, except by the lively practice of these two graces, we do not stir up our selves to take hould of him, how can our lives chuze but be sad and comfortlesse? Surely, if ever, we had now need, to presse upon more familiar acquaintance with God in all his graces, and* (*as* David *did*) *to view his* Temple *well.*

True it is, that the old Iew, had little knowledge of God, save by the name of Iehova, Alsufficient, and a generall aime at the promise of a Messia, the blessed seed to come. Doubtlesse, they lived at poore termes: It was enough for them to cast an eye upon Gods Temple, *as* Daniel *in captivity, and* Iona *in the Whales belly might do; Strange and deep was that mercy which would so far off behold such, as so far off beheld him; but now we, the Church of the New Testament are come nearer to God, we are come to mount Sion, to the heavenly Ierusalem, to the Church of the first born, to Iesus himself the Mediator of the Covenant, and the bloud of sprinkling, which speakes better things then that of* Abel. *We are come now beyond the Porch and Sanctuary, even to the Holy of Holies, through his flesh, that hath broken downe the vaile of seperation. So that now we are past viewing of the Temple well, for we had need become this Temple our selves; Whose corner stone is precious Iesus, and wee precious stones built upon him, and rising up daily to a more lively and well proportioned building. A little taste of the gift of God, a few good reaches and affections after holinesse are not enough for us, but to be grounded upon these foundations of Selfe-deniall and Faith, which promise us an open entrance into that eternall Temple. According therefore to those talents of Wisdome and Know-*

Dan. 6. 10. Jona 2. 7.

Heb. 12. 24.

2 Cor. 3. 18.

2 Pet. 1. 4. 5.

2 Pet. 1. 1.

Knowledge which the Lord hath long imparted to us by the bleſſed lights of his Miniſters (who ſometimes ſhined in our Sphere, but now in glory it is expected at our hands, That we comprehend with all Saints that depth and breadth of love which is in Chriſt, that he may dwell in our hearts by faith, & that (forgetting our firſt elements) we ſtrive toward perfection ſo far as in this vaile of miſery its poſsible to reach to. I know your Honour hath long made this your marke; and that leaving things behinde, you have long looked forward to the prize of the high calling of God, and to that end have I ſent you this Booke, that it may affoord you ſome ſuccour and direction hereto in your private condition, and ſad widowhood. Theſe thirty yeares I have wholly intermitted any converſe with your Laiſhip (an error ſcarce pardonable) except your ſo farre diſtant dwelling from the place of your firſt nativity and education, did plead ſome pardon for me, being one whoſe age and occaſions admit no travell to remote places. Yet have I not wholy been unacquainted with your courſe and converſation in Gods waies; nay I know through how many combats and fights of affliction God hath brought your Honor into the condition wherein you ſtand: And beſides, I may ſay of you, as the Lord once ſaid of Iehoſhua, *Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire? Hath not the Lord taken you as a dry branch and planted you in the Courts of his owne houſe, to grow well-liking and flouriſhing in goodneſſe? Sometimes the Lord abhorred a female out of that flecke which had a male. But now the males of your flocke are all gone, the Lord hath left you, as a female hope of recovering the honour of a collapſed family. A great honour: for to ſay the truth, who hath beheld ſo deep an eclipſe of ſuch as have beene neare you, as your eyes have done? Few that I know in our Country, for their eſtate, had fairer meanes, nor ſuffered a greater decay. Yet God hath ingraſted your Honour into another ſtocke, and therein turned the ſtreame of former proſperity upon your ſelfe againe, the onely remnant of that family: you have ſeene upon how weake ſhoulders the faire necke of all outward welfare ſtands, of which the Lord may ſpeake with more reaſon, then that bloudy Emperour to his wife* [O pulcra cervix, ſed cum ego voluero, abſcindetur] *Oh faire necke, but when I pleaſe it ſhall be cut off: And why doe you ſurvive ſuch as are gone, ſave to be an inſtrument of happineſſe to your poſterity, that from that holy oile of the Spirit which*

Eph. 3. 17 18.
Heb. 6. 1.
Phil 3. 13.
Heb. 10. 32.
Zach. 3. 2.
Mal. 1. 14.
Nero ex Suet.

which runs downe your head, the skirts of your cloathing might bee wetted, and your hopefull off-spring consecrated to God.

The great respect which your Grandfather, Father and Mother of worthy memory shewed to that reverend servant of Christ, my Predecessor; the remembrance also of your first childhood and education, being so neare to my dwelling: Your Honors frequent salutes, and invitations by sundry who have travelled this way that I would visit you: But, above all, that blessed report of your Grace, which (as the Panthars breath to all the beasts of the Forrest) hath made your name sweet and savoury in the Church of God; all these have emboldned me by so good an occasion as this is (ere I leave the world) to soder up my errors, and incivilities, by prefixing your name to this my Dedication.

Plin. Nat. hist. Ælian.

There is a creature which the Historians call ἡμερόβιον ζῶον, one dayes life, dead as soone as bred. Well may many bookes claime this name now a dayes, whose breeding costs longer time then their life amounts to: For why? Each humor fancies what hee likes, some books of Poetry, some of story and delight, which humors while they last, bookes sorting with them are catcht up, but when they are downe, bookes lie by. Novelty takes up, and laies downe as shee pleaseth. Books of practice above all other find least entertainment. From all such, my appeale is to your protection under God. It hath pleased him to exercise my pen in sundry kindes of Treatises, which have not escaped the hands of the better and more solid sort of readers, and that with some fruit. I have now thought fit to make the like triall in publishing some of those my last Lectures which I preached at my last farewell to publicke. The perusall whereof, with your loving acceptance of them, I leave to your Christian diligence, and Gods blessing: Not doubting (Right Honourable) but that God having made you a reall patterne of those things which here I write, he will also make you a willing Protector of the Book it selfe: and no small encouragement to many, both to peruse and practise what they reade: if God shall make them as fruitfull in the reading, as they were in the preaching, I shall have double cause of rejoycing. In which hope I humbly take my leave, remaining,

Your Honors by due desert much obliged,

DANIEL ROGERS.

From my Study Wethersf. this 16. of May. 1641.

TO THE RELIGIOVS AND IVDICIOVS READER.

Christian Reader:

IT's with Books as with Trees: These although they have many under-branches, and water-bowes; Yet they have some Master and chiefe ones, into which the maine sap of the root is carried: Those have sundry points and parcells contained in them of lesse consequence, but some mainer and more principal Doctrines, into the which their whole strength and stream runs. So is it with this Book. As many occasionall and lesser matters offer themselves herein, so, there are others of great importance purposely handled, as in the list of particulars thou hast them presented unto thee. But above all the rest, that which was the first motive to induce me to chuse this Text, and to spend my whole years pains about it, was, That it seemed to contain in it very pregnant and plentifull overtures and occasions of discovering Self and carnall Reason to the hearts of my Auditors. How dangerous a rocke it was to all who sailing in the sea of this world, towards heaven, be not very skilfull and wary marriners to espie and shun it, to wit, that when they seem to have escaped all other occurrents which might stop their course, yet falling upon this, unhappily split their hopes, and make shipwracke of all. In this argument therefore, thou shalt perceive, that a great peece of my travell in these Lectures is improved. It shall not be amisse therefore a little to prepare thee for the conceiving of this notion of Selfe, and her

Section 1.

her oppoſite Self-deniall, that it may the better appeare to thee in what ſenſe its eſpecially handled in the Treatiſe following.

Section 2.

Selfe and Self-deniall are tearmes not eaſily underſtood, except wiſely diſcerned and diſtinguiſhed into their ſeverall meanings and exceptions. And firſt, Self is taken in a good conſtruction for that appetite of the ſoule, conſidered in her pure naturals, and in this ſenſe, its nothings elſe, ſave the deſire of the whole man in her ſeverall faculties, naturall, ſenſible and reaſonable, to maintaine and preſerve it ſelfe in the integrity of her eſtate. And thus each creature (not man alone) hath an inſtinct planted in it by God, to affect and enſue the meanes of it owne ſafety and ſupport (as that Orator ſpeakes) in which reſpect, its ſtiled by this name of Selfe, not becauſe its the whole being of the creature, but a faculty neerly touching the ſuſtaining of her particular being. Plants, Beaſts, have this diſpoſition to favour what is for them, to ſhunne what is againſt them; much more man. It was a peece of *Adams* wiſdome and perfection, and ſtill would be in us, as it was in him, blameleſſe, if ſomewhat had not come betweene. Its the ſame whereof *Paul* ſpeakes, No man ever hated his owne fleſh, but nouriſhed and cheriſhed it: Now the contrary to this Selfe, is Self-deniall; which although it is of all other the eminenteſt grace in other reſpects, yet in this, is the moſt eminent vice, for what is ſo hideous as for a man to throw off nature, and deny it the due meanes of life, health and proſperity? Even an unnaturall cruelty, and worſe then to maligne or hurt another: yea this Selfe-love is ſo good, that its the ſtandard of all offices of love concerning our neighbour, Doe as you would be done to: Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelfe. And were not this ſinleſſe, the holy Ghoſt ſhould teach us to be mercenaries, by perſwading us to obedience by ſo many arguments taken from our ſelves, cloathing grace in the colours of gaine, ſafety, health to our navill, marrow to our bones, good name, long life, and the like.

1. Branch. Pure Selfe.

2. Branch.

But this is not the Selfe we meane. Selfe therefore in a ſecond

second difference, is that which is called corrupt Selfe. And its no other, save the bad Selfe, of good Selfe, an ill quality cleaving to a good subject. In this sense it is (upon point) no other then old *Adam*; the depravednesse and disorder of the appetite before spoken of. As the wildenesse of an horse, or his lamenesse are accidentall to his good metall and good pace: even so, that faculty whereby I naturally seeke mine owne welfare and safety is good: But the disorder thereof, whereby I seeke my selfe corruptly and impiously is accidentall thereto, and separable from it by grace. In Scripture, this is called flesh, lust, and sometime (by a metonymie of the subject for the adjunct) Selfe; to shew the inwardnesse and rooted familiarity of corruption to nature. So *Iob* 42. *I abhorre my selfe in dust and ashes.* So *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12. *Of my selfe I will not boast.* And, if I preach my selfe, that is my corrupt selfe: *Adam* was so created, that God was his appetite, the desire of his soule was to him onely as the chiefe good, and his owne happinesse, further or elsewhere he sought not: Him he trusted to, honoured, obeyed and embraced with his whole man. But after he had deserted God, he justly was deserted of him to seeke after an imaginary happinesse, falling downe (by the penalty of Selfe) to a denied apple, and thereby given over to the creature, to grope therein after a welfare, ever coveted, never obtained. Still the subject nature remained to seek himself; but that directive of minde, and freedome of pure will that kept him before, now being gone, he was changed into a corrupt Self-seeking and Selfe-love. As it fares with him that strives to behold the bright body of the Sun (but by reason of weak eies) cannot, dazles and flags downeward, and thinkes he sees three Sunnes for one, but in truth sees none: So the soule sunke down from God by wilfull desertion, and not being able any longer to behold the excellency that is in him, falls downe and adores a false Trinity, the lust of the heart, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, the vaine cursed creature (that hath nothing in it equalling the soule) instead of God. Selfe then in this sense is nothing else, save corruption and originall sinne.

Corrupt Selfe in generall.

Contrary to this Selfe is Selfe-deniall in a good ſenſe, which to ſpeake properly, is nothing elſe ſave Regeneration, whereby the ſoule generally denies corrupt Selfe in her frame and ſtreame, bending a contrary way; forſaking the creature, and returning to God, *Eſay* 55.8. her firſt happineſſe; and making him really that unto her, which corrupt Selfe erroneouſly was; That is herſelfe, and herſelfe his, to ſeeke his ends and felicitie therein, renouncing her owne. In this ſenſe, Divines ſpeake and write, when they treat about the ſtate of Vnregeneracy or Apoſtacy from God, and to this head, referre all thoſe markes, ſignes and degrees, whereby Selfe may be diſcovered: Alſo, to this referre all that is uſually diſcourſed touching converſion of the ſoule to God, and turning herſelfe, *Acts* 26.18. from her vaine Idolls and darkeneſſe, to the living God. All is no other in a word, ſave ſetting the ſoul ſtreight to her firſt object, renouncing the Selfe and obliquity thereof: when fleſhly wiſdome of the minde, and carnall ſavour of the heart, is turned to the wiſdome of God to ſalvation, and the ſavouring of it freely and ſweetly, then is this great cure wrought. This of the ſecond.

3. *Branch.* Selfe in the, remedy.

But all this while, I have ſpoken of corrupt Self generally conſidered and apart: But herein yet, appeares not her own venom; while ſhe is let alone, ſhe is ſtill and quiet, as a ſnake in her hole, being no whit leſſe herſelfe, I grant, but yet not apearing in her right colours. Selfe in the remedy, is the true corrupt Selfe; when God ſends her in a light to diſcover all her filth, to convince, to tame her, and fetch her home, then ſhe ſhewes the metall ſhe is made of, and then it appeares, it was hell fire that kindled this heat in her, and bred this monſter of privation and enmity to God. (Marke well what I ſay, all you that thinke originall ſinne a bugbeare) when the Law came, ſinne revived, it was dead before; luſt was unknowne till the Law ſaid, Thou ſhalt not luſt. But as the Toad being prickt ſpits poiſon: So Selfe encountred with a Law, proves out of meaſure ſinfull, and rebelliouſly daſhes herſelf againſt it as a pitcher againſt a ſtone wall: to this kinde, referre all that rebellion of Selfe againſt

1. In the Law.

againſt the word of conviction; and that ſly-ſelfe which chuſes to ſcrue herſelfe into the deepeſt bondage and horror that may be, rather then ſhee will come to the bent of Gods bow, that is, loſe her life and proud ſpirit upon the pikes of wrath, which is the onely way which God hath appointed, to wit, when ſhe is wholy broken in peeces upon this wheele and come to an utter ſtrait, then to ſhew her a doore of hope: of this, it ſhall be ſufficient to ſpeake but a word, ſince I have largely treated of it in her due place.

But legall Selfe is not the deepeſt poiſon of Selfe: The worke of the Law is but a remote remedy: The Goſpell is that neare object which above all other diſcovers Selfe in her kinde: The cloſer the Goſpell and Chriſt come to the ſoule, the more oppoſite is Selfe; and as Faith is the moſt eminently ſpirituall grace above all graces; ſo is Selfe the deepeſt deadlieſt enemy to it of all other, yea to whatſoever ſavours of it, any promiſe, any offer of mercy, any work of Chriſt in the ſoule, any preparation making that way: Selfe was jealous of the Law, leſt ſhe be diſpoſſeſſed: But infinitely more jealous of Chriſt, leſt he take new poſſeſſion: Its the moſt uncouth, deſolate object unto her, to thinke of giving up herſelf to Chriſt, and leaving her old hold, that can be imagined. Hence come thoſe infinite, many and ſubtill and deſperate feares, doubts, impoſſibilities, difficulties, objections againſt the promiſe in the rebellious, thoſe invincible ſnares of ill conſcience accuſtomed to ſin, that ſo great a ſinner, ſo unworthy a wretch, ſhould ever ſpeed of favour from ſo potent a God, ſo juſt and terrible a Judge. And hence is it alſo, that not onely Selfe is ſo obſtinate in the wicked: But, when a ſoule is got under a condition of mercy, yet then Selfe wraps ſuch a world of exceptions againſt her owne particular beleeving. Hence alſo it is, that, rather then ſhe will be caſt out, ſhee will put herſelfe upon the promiſe oftimes with ſelf-preſumption, reſting in her falſe hopes, duties, performances, affections, preparations, and the like, but all to deceive herſelfe, and by ſeeming ſelf-deniall, to twine, as the Ivy about the oake,

But eſpecially in the Goſpel.

for her owne ends, that by mixing herſelfe with Chriſt, ſhe might ſtill grow from her owne roote, and reſt in her bottome, that ſo not Chriſt, but Selfe might be all in all; contrary to this Selfe, is Selfe-deniall, the laſt and ſureſt preparative of the ſoule to Chriſt; for although all be good, yet none ſo ſure as this; this being added to the reſt, argues a ſpirit of ſaving grace to be at worke, and making way for Chriſt to caſt out this ſtrong man, and take poſſeſſion in the ſoule. And of this Selfe, and her oppoſite deniall of Selfe, I doe chiefly treat in this Treatiſe following, as thou ſhalt ſee at thy leaſure, although perhaps I trench upon Self, by the way, in other reſpects. And ſo much for this third ſenſe.

4. Branch. Selfe in ſanctification.

Yet a fourth and laſt difference remaines, that is, Selfe in ſanctification. For whether we ſpeake of hypocrites, who deceive themſelves in an opinion of it (when as alas they are farre from it!) and in a perſwaſion of their faith, becauſe they have ſome ſeeming fruits of a change, whereas they never came within the liſts of converſion either by Law or Goſpel, and therefore walke in a covenant of morall workes, abſtinences and performances: Or whether we ſpeake of the truly ſanctified, even they may miſtake the worke of ſanctification in themſelves when they turne aſide, reſting upon workes, without claſping and cleaving to their principle in all their courſe: I ſay, Selfe is not ſo quite defaced in a beleeving ſoule it ſelfe, but that abundance of old dregs unmortified ſtill remaine. Touching the former, the hypocrite, how eaſily is hee miſtaken by Selfe when he imagines himſelfe an holy perſon, when alas all he hath is drawn from a land-ſpring of naturall parts and gifts, excellent affections, a conſcience onely enlightned to ſee and loath ſome ſinne, cuſtome, obſervation and example of the good, not to be good, but to be like the good only, good education, legall reſtraints, or good Lawes of men, and ſuperiours; here are deepe deluſions: And yet the wel-ſpring of Chriſt is wanting to make the ſtreames naturall, ſweet and running, equall & uniforme, laſting and conſtant, ſincere and entire. And ſurely who ſo deceives him-

himselfe in his conversion, will easily deceive himself in his sanctification: one Selfe will apply it selfe to all objects, be they never so diverse. But Selfe-deniall will not satisfie herselfe in such shreds: A body of death, the pollution and staine of nature, are reall strong principles: It must bee a second *Adam* which expels the first; pangs and devotions, imitations, affections, externall complements are not able to compasse so great a worke. So much for this; an argument well deserving the best service.

To this fourth, I annex the consideration of Selfe in point of conversation and practice. And this is nothing else save the expression of it selfe in the way of common life, a most endlesse and infinite object to think of. Self in corrupt nature, Selfe in the remedy, Selfe in sanctification, are three false principles, if she passe through all these three unmortified and undenied, shee will as a streame overflow all the life. Hence all those usuall passages of self in the conversation of men: The hollow hearts of most men in friendship, especially if tried: The self-love of men in their contracts, bargaines, buyings, sellings: The cousenages, circumventions, tricks and devices, shifts and equivocations of men for their owne ends; their unfaithfulnesse, breaking daies, promises, yea oaths and vowes; Selfe is at the end of all. Hence mens endlesse adoring of the creature, money is the man, pleasure is our life, preferment and honour is most mens Idol: Whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who minde earthly things, *Phil.* 3. 18. and the like we see in mens conversation in other kindes; as if you crosse them in this selfe of theirs, they are wilde: Give mee my wil or else I dye; take away my gourd, and I am franticke. So in their afflictions, whither runne men, save to their Idols of good workes, their charity and almes, what good have they done, how moraly they have lived, what credit they have had. If controversies befall them, how stiffe in their owne cause, how inexorable in point of gain, how hard to forgive wrongs, and injuries, how abounding in their owne sense, and stiffe in their owne conceit. One River in tract of ground, hath divers names: so one

Annex to this fourth is, Selfe in conversation.

ſelfe wee ſee in divers objects, puts on a diverſe exception: But contrary to all is ſelf-deniall. If any man will bee my Diſciple, let him deny himſelf; elſe ſelfe will keep him far enough from God and Chriſt, from faith, from ſanctification, from duty. And ſelfe-deniall in this kind is nothing elſe, Prov. 10.27. ſave integrity and uprightneſſe of a mans way. And ſo much be ſaid for thy better light in the diſtinct underſtanding of this Treatiſe. Other weighty arguments are alſo treated of herein, as the point of Faith, obedience of Commands, nature of the Promiſes; but becauſe they are more familiar objects, I leave thee to the peruſall thereof, as they ſhall offer themſelves to thy view.

That which I will further adde ſhall bee to thee (good Reader) to whoſe hands it ſhall be the lot of this Booke to come: To wit, that both thou and I, and all Chriſtians into whoſe hands the great *depoſitum* of Truth is put, doe contend to our uttermoſt for the ſafegard and indemnity thereof, that as we have received it entire from our predeceſſors, ſo we may keepe and tranſmit it to them that ſhall follow us, without impair or blemiſh. Novelty, prophaneneſſe and lukewarmeneſſe are the three epidemiall evils, which as cankers, in ſeverall kindes and waies, fret to the heart of our Religion. So long as we can keep ſound Doctrine on wing, we ſhall hope to kill or weaken all three. As *David* to *Abiathar*, ſo may Truth ſay to Religion, Abide by me, he that ſeeketh thy life, ſeeketh mine, and with me thou ſhalt be in ſafety. Doubleſſe if a man had three cankers in three ſeverall parts of his body threatning the heart, he would thinke it very much imported him to looke to himſelfe. the Holy Ghoſt himſelfe hath warned us of all three: of novelty, *Paul* tels us, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. Now the Spirit ſpeaketh evidently, that in the latter times men ſhall depart from the faith, giving heed to ſeducing ſpirits, ſpeaking lies in hypocriſie, &c. of prophaneneſſe the ſame Apoſtle warnes us, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. In the latter times ſhall bee hard daies, &c. mentioning eighteene of this rable, all riſe and ranke among us. The three our Saviour Chriſt himſelfe foretels to bee the diſeaſe of theſe times; and that

as

as a fruit of the former. *Matth.* 24.13. For there having ſpoken of novelty, and falſe Prophets, verſe 5. and verſe 11. he ſubjoines verſe 12. That iniquity ſhall abound; marke, error and prophaneneſſe concurre: And what of both theſe? Surely men beholding diverſity in opinions (through novelty) and prophaneneſſe of life, ſhall grow indifferent in point of their Religion, not greatly caring which end go forward, yea many zelots ſhall quaile, for the love of many ſhall wax cold. We ſee all come to paſſe: Therefore let us all whom God cals by tongue or by penne, looke to the ſafeguard of Truth, and ſay as thoſe did to *David*, ſo we to Truth, Thou art worth ten thouſand of us, if we dye, wee may be ſupplied, but if thou ſhouldeſt miſcarry, all of us muſt periſh. As the life of old *Iacob* was bound up in *Benjamins*; ſo ours in Truth.

As in ſome former Treatiſes I have endeavoured to give my poore witneſſe to the practicall truths of Religion as a moſt ſworne enemy to all Schiſme and Novelty; ſo in this, I aime more eſpecially to encounter prophaneneſſe and lukewarmeneſſe, and both to convince the former, and rectifie the latter. As Sinne lies deeply rooted in the one; ſo even Grace it ſelfe, for lacke of quickning, lies dead in the other. Thoſe that are not ſunke into a prophane way, yet may be ſunke from a zealous. I conſider with my ſelfe, that as Treatiſes doe well for maintaining of truths: ſo Sermons are more peculiar for the ſuppreſſing of vicious manners, or lukewarm profeſſion. In Treatiſes we ſpeak Gods concluſions; in Sermons God ſeemes to ſpeake his owne; ſo great the oddes is, in what way a truth be uttered, our owne or Gods. As Iſrael thought herſelfe doubly ſtrong, having got the Arke into the Campe to fight with the Philiſtins: ſo in preaching, we ſeem to doe as the Angel, who went to heaven in the ſmoake of Gods ſacrifice. There is more of God in this method, then in any; and wee had need uſe the forcibleſt corraſives to eat out the dead fleſh of vice, and the keeneſt ſpurres to drive others out of the declining temper of their lukewarme profeſſion and neutrality. *Moſes*, we know, might ſerve to teach people Truths

Section 5.

and

and Ordinances: But when the great worke of ſcaring rebels, and convincing the conſcience was to be done, God himſelfe was faine to deſcend in his likeneſſe with terror and ſmoke, and all too little: and queſtionleſſe, that is the moſt noble Ordinance which works moſt upon, and moſt prevailes with the part of man which is nobleſt, and whereby we draw neareſt to God, the heart, I meane, and the affections. In Gods ſacrifices, we read not much of the looking upon the braines, or offering them up to God by fire, but of the heart, liver, and the inward parts, the fat of them, as choice, was Gods part. The reaſon no doubt was, that, although the underſtanding is the guide of the ſoul, yet becauſe the object of it is onely truth: But the object of the will and affections is properly good; and by embracing and affecting of good, we come nearer to God then by meere underſtanding of truth; therefore the word preached moſt affecting the inner man, by drawing, perſwading, convincing, quickning and comforting of it, muſt needs have the preeminence of all other Ordinances. There is oftentimes (in the unregenerate alway) a gulfe ſet betweene the underſtanding, and the affections, ſo that the one never comes at the other; but when once affections are truly ſtirred, this gulfe vaniſheth, and an eaſie path-way is made in the ſoule to welcome Gods grace, and to expreſſe it in the life, neither ſeeme we in any other reſpect to excell thoſe wicked Angels, ſave in the goodneſſe of our affections. I ſpeake not this as an enemy to knowledge, without which the heart is nought, but becauſe the wofull age we live in above all other things is moſt empty, and yet moſt careleſſe of getting good affections. Every one thinkes himſelfe to be happy in that he knoweth, not in that he affecteth, beleeveth or loveth, whereas in theſe latter, our union and communion with God conſiſts. The heart and ſpirit of the man, his bent, his frame, that is the man: and I beleeve that as they ſay of the materialls of the world, they would ſoone diſſolve if the ſoule of it were taken away; ſo the vaſt body of Light and Knowledge of many profeſſors will ruine and oppreſſe herſelfe ere long, for lack of ſutable life,

life, ſpirit and affections. This notion ſeemed to me very forcible to perſwade the publiſhing of theſe Sermons after ſome other Treatiſes formerly ſet forth.

But (will ſome ſay) we grant all: Sermons are indeed as you ſay, powerfull inſtruments to ſtirre the ſoule; but what is that to printing and writing? You know no pencill can fully reach a living face: The Preſſe cannot comprehend the Pulpit, and writing of a Booke, is but as the picture of a dead man, in compariſon of the lively voice. To whom I anſwer, Time hath beene when I have beene ſo farre tranſported with this thought, that I would have preferred the preaching of a Sermon to the printing of a Booke. But now I muſt ſing another note, and therefore I anſwer further, although the objection in part be true, yet conſider God hath covered the uncomely parts with greateſt honour, and although the grace of the Spirit in preaching, and giving overtures of lively impreſſion to the heart, cannot be equalled by printing, yet printing hath alſo that peculiar uſe which preaching it ſelfe reacheth not, that is, conſtantly to repreſent things, which while they were in uttering ſeemed pretious, but yet are ſoon forgotten: I ſay to preſent them alway to the eye, and ſo to hold them there, as a naile taſtned in a ſure place from wanzing and leaking out. And moreover, when the Preacher ſhall with diligence and obſervation, both marke wherein God aſſiſted him moſt, and hold himſelfe as neare as he can to his expreſſions, ſomewhat more may be compaſſed in this kinde then otherwiſe. But however, he is a foole who counts not halfe a loafe better then no bread, or deſpiſeth the Moonſhine becauſe the Sun is down: and I hope, that ſuch as were once attentive hearers of theſe things, when they read theſe Lectures, ſhall in ſome ſort recognize the ſavour and grace, which in hearing they ſeemed to acknowledge. Luke 1.4.

Wherefore, to conclude, as I for my part thinke it a favour that I may be the overſeer of mine owne Bookes, which elſe by audacious and unskilfull adventurers might have beene defaced, and alſo, that I may ſet my baſe heart on work any way to prevent ſloth & eaſe. So I ſhall deſire

thee (good Reader) to apply thy ſelf with thy beſt care and prayers, to peruſe what God hath herein preſented thee withall: And if thou pickeſt any thing out, bleſſe God, and pray for me, even for

Thine in Chriſt,

D. Rogers.

The liſt of Contents.

TOuching Gods Soveraignty and Freedome in decreeing.
Touching the preventing, aſſiſting and perfecting grace of God in mans vocation.
Touching Selfe, and Selfe love.
Touching carnall Reaſon. How farre policy lawfull.
Touching Gods way in humbling the ſoule: or the condition of the Promiſe.
Touching Servants and their duties with Maſters, a full diſcourſe.
Touching Faith, a diſcourſe thereof at large.
Touching the due reverence & ſupport of the Miniſter by the people.
Touching the Promiſes and Performances of God: Their nature and uſe.
Touching the effect of Faith and converſion in the Soule.

Theſe are ſome few of many Doctrines and Points handled in the enſuing Diſcourſe. A taſte is ſufficient. Read and finde them out.

A Table of the principall things contained in this Book, Alphabetically framed.

A.

ACknowledgement and Revelation of truth is to be ſought from God by prayer, pag. 6

Advantage which God hath us at in all reſpects, ſhould teach us to walke humbly, pag. 22

Aſcribing too much to the inſtrument, makes God deprive us of ſo many promiſes. The like effect of proud aſcribing too much to our own parts, ibid. pag. 69

Arts and learning muſt not bee pul'd downe, becauſe God uſes poore helps, pag. 72

All ſorts muſt beware of carnall reaſon, 22

Advices for the well ordering of our courſe. 3. Faith in God. 2. Righteouſneſſe to Man. 3. Contentation in our ſelves, 256

Admonition to all ſorts; Beware leſt you claw this itch of Selfe in any, Miniſters and others: take heed of it, 260

Aſſiſting grace, wherein it ſtands: Sundry inſtances of it mentioned, p. 282. *It is the ground of great conſolation to a poore ſoule by reaſon of the priviledges iſſuing thence,* ibid. *It is a bottome of great confidence and experience to a poore ſoule; and how,* ibid. *It is encouragement to fearfull ones, and how,* ibid.

To Adviſe aright in ſpirituall diſtreſſes, is no eaſie task. Reaſons why, 321. *Both in reſpect of the party counſelling and counſelled, and that ſundry wayes; both for the diſpoſitions and diſeaſes,* ibid. *Many particulars about both,* ibid. 326

Anger muſt bee pacified with meekneſſe, 327. *yet with exception,* ib.

Adminiſtrations of God muſt not bee quarrelled 352

Aſſurance cannot bee where faith is not; yet faith may be where aſſurance is not, 480

Markes of Aſſurance, 513

Æquivocating with our conſcience in point of Commands for the ſaving of our owne skin, is abominable, 525

Accord of promiſes ſtands in two things, either of promiſes to perſons, or of perſons to them 569

All ſorts may not by and by beleeve promiſes, but ſuch are qualified ibid.

Accord of promiſes to perſons ſtands in ſundry particulars: 1. *Promiſes muſt be conceived with reference to the truth in generall.* 2. *according to Gods order, which is firſt to beleeve the promiſes of being and reconciling, and then of well-being and ſanctifying.* 3. *a promiſe muſt bee beleeved according to the intent of the promiſer.* 4. *when a promiſe is beleeved according to the extent thereof.* 5. *when it is beleeved according to the peculiarity and ſpeciall uſe thereof.* 6. *promiſes made to the head, belong to the members: promiſes made to the whole body, belong to each part: promiſes belonging to any one member, belong to the body, and to any other member, except there bee a reſtraint*

straint to the person. 7 when they are beleeved according to the scope. ibid. to 574
Affectation to turne Scriptures to allegoricall and typicall senses, is bold and dangerous, 593
Admonition to the people of God to nourish the Spirit of grace and conversion, 873

B.

The Battery which God layes against the fort of a rebellious soule. 31
Bodily crosses can reach no further then to bodily ends to abase the outward man, 62
Body of death not encountred by a few pangs and desires of conversion, 144
To be bottomed and grounded soundly, is a singular favour of God, 253
Bad servants must not thinke it too late to repent, 312
Blesse God for bringing us under the condition of his grace, 490
Not to beleeve a promise according to the intention of it is sinfull. How and wherein it may bee instanced, 581
A question how farre Bonds binde in conscience. The answer to it, and six reasons of the same, ibid. 607
Breakers of covenant with God, are in a bad condition, 605.609

C.

Calling to grace double: unconditionall or conditionall, both free, 10
Conditionall call, what, and how free, 10
Cavillers against the free grace of God confuted, p. 25. Five or six sorts of them, ibid. 26.27.
Corruption is subdued in Gods people by peece-meale, 61
Charity in our judgement of men, must not draw us to over-foolish credulity, 64
Corrupt fraile nature cannot beare any great measures of grace without swelling, 90
Christians must look for difficulties, as well in their progresse as in their entrance, 94
Corruption how restrained by God, pag.
Civill men in how dangerous a state, 106
Carnally wise men scorne the simplicity of Christ, 107
Carnall worldling full of himselfe, 107
Carnality of good parts an enemy to Christ, 108
Carnall savour of superiority, or greatnesse, how prejudiciall to Christ, 109
Carnall persons admonished, ibid.
The Creature a dangerous object to tickle & inchant a corrupt heart, 10. It hath a peculiarnes of deceit in it, 10. What an enemy it is to Christ, 113. in three respects: 1. It conceits falsly that God loves it. 2. Nestles it selfe in her ease and welfare. 3. Heares the Word preached without due respect, if not with disdaine, ibid. Remedies against this disease foure or five, ibid.
Constantines restoring the Church to her priviledges, eclipsed her pureneſſe, 116
Crosses great meanes to let out Selfe out of the soule, as a dropsie by incision, 150
Corruption of mans heart how fertile of shifts and tricks to hurt her self, 192
Cavils of a base heart against Religion and the grace of God, 193
Carnall reason a great enemy to faith, 195. What it is, ibid. Three steps or degrees of it, ibid. What subjects I meane, not prophane persons, but Professors, ibid. Sundry instances of Carnall reason, 197.198.199

Corrupt

Corrupt custome hath marred right reason in us, 202
Carnall reason justly infatuated by God, 203
Convincement of Carnall reason in sundry particulars, 204
Carnall reason described by the savour thereof, ibid. *and that in three or foure particulars*, 205. 206
Carnall policy causeth jealousie among Christians, 210
Carnall reason eates up grace, 211
Christians of all other had need bee wisest,
Carnall men deale with God, as they doe in common affaires, 225
Counsels against carnal reason foure, 229
Carnall reason must come in humbly, and yeeld up her weapons to God, 230
Carnall reason wishes old wayes in stead of a promise, 231
Carnall policy unlawfull, 239. *In what particulars it appeares*: 1. *politick shifts*. 2. *politick neutrality*. 3. *politick and Iesuiticall equivocations*. 4. *Selfe love*. 5. *Formality*. 6. *Profanenesse*. 7. *Religion*. 8 *Blanching of evil*. ibid.
Choicenesse which men use in things outward, should teach them wisedome to be well principled in spirituall things, 256
Cavillers against God, as if hee were in fault that they are no better, convinced, 272
Close cleavers to the promise of God, are in a blessed state, 355
Comfort to all fearfull ones, in that Gods way is sweet and easie, 377
Common service in the season of speciall duty, stinkes in Gods nostrils, 396
Conversion hath many steppes and degrees ere it bee fully wrought, though the act of it bee at one time: and why. Sundry instances of the point, 443. *And reasons why God takes this course*, ibid. *Markes by which the soule may know whether conversion shall be perfected*, ibid. *to pag.* 452
Censure neither our selves nor others touching our finall estates 454
Cleare and justifie God in his delay of grace, 457
Consolation to all who have found God in the worke of conversion 488
Christians of crabbed, peevish and stubborne hearts, wrong their soules of faith, 467
All such as are under the condition of mercy, may and ought to beleeve, 470. *Reasons of it five or six, what the condition of faith is*. viz. *no procuring, but a signifying thing. Why this condition is requisite. Who is the worker of it. It is a middle thing between meer corruption & grace*, ibid. *The steppes of it foure or five*, ibid.
To cast the soule upon the promise, what it is, and wherein it consists, 504
The Commands of God are sad and solemne things, 516. *explication of it. Reasons of it sundry*: 1. *They were first given in a solemne manner*: 2. *They borrow their nature from him and his greatnes whom they come from*: 3. *From the proportion of the Commands of earthly Princes*: 4. *The rewards which God crownes obedience withall, are solemne and great*: 5. *Because whatsoever is in God, is eminently so, and therefore his soveraignty in commanding*: 6. *Else the subjects of God his Kingdome might give him Law, rather then take Law from him*: 7. *The Lord hath power to disanull and frustrate*

ſtrate the ſtrongeſt Lawes; therefore alſo to make Lawes ſad and ſolemne, ibid. *to* 521.

Chriſt Ieſus, the Lord of the Sabbath, tranſlated the reſt of the creation to the reſt of Redemption, 527

The cunning and colours of hypocrites to ſhift off commands, 533. *Two inſtances thereof*, ibid.

Chriſt at his comming will waſh off all the colours of hypocrites, 536

Cloſe obeyers of God in looſe times, ſhall have cloſe comfort in Troubles, 549

The command of the Goſpel to beleeve in Chriſt, is to bee obeyed above all commands, 559. *All other commands iſſue from this*, 560

Churches judgement muſt guide us, but not principle us in the truths of Scripture, 576

Charmes and ſpells of good Witches, what to be thought of, 590

Such as charge God for breaking of promiſes which hee never made, very ſinfull, 610

Claymers of performances of promiſes, and yet want a promiſe, ſinfull, ibid. *How men deceive themſelves herein three or foure wayes*, ibid. 1. *By Gods forbearance*: 2. *Their abſtinence from open ſinnes*: 3. *By outward bleſſings*. 4. *By their Religion*, ibid.

Chriſt makes the ſoile of promiſes rich, 617

Each true Cure hath the ſpirit of the cure attending upon it, 856. *What is meant by the Spirit of the cure. Explication of it, with an illuſtration hiſtoricall. Proofes of it, and reaſons, ſix*: 1. *For the manifeſtation of Gods worke in the ſoule*: 2. *For their heartning againſt all future difficulties*: 3. *To make them objects of obſervation in the world*: 4. *From the irreſiſtable power of grace in the ſoule*: 5. *Becauſe God is the God of Order*: 6. *For the future convincement of the ſoule, if ſhe decline*, 862

Counterfeit cures of ſoule common in the world, but true ones rare, 363

Caveats againſt declining in ſundry particulars, 874

Some carriages of an unſound heart diſcovered, 883

Conſolation to all ſuch as have gotten the ſpirit of converſion, and ſtand faſt therein, 891

D.

Deſpiſed and meanes ones, if godly, may comfort themſelves upon good grounds, 73

God Delayes the perfecting of grace in his people for ſpeciall cauſes: 1. *To try all which is in their heart*: 2. *To begin with them as he meanes to proceed*: 3. *To teach them the price of his grace*: 4. *To diſcerne them from ſuch as are not of his number*, 88.89.90.91

Difficulties which Gods poore Novices meet with in their converſion manifold: ſome eight or ten of them mentioned, 92.93.95

Degenerate baſeneſſe of our nature diſcovered, 103

Duties of Devotion and Religion, how prejudiciall to Chriſt, 116

What Degrees in Religion a man may attaine unto. To how ſmall purpoſe, 117. *Wherein they faile, ſeaven or eight particulars*, ibid. *Admonition againſt it*, ibid.

Deniall of Selfe urged, 119. *Upon what reſpects. Many dangerous lets to hinder it*, ibid. *and counſels to further it*, 162. *Exhortation to it in two things*: 1. *To doe all for God*: 2. *Suffer all for him*, ibid.

To diſpute for God and the promiſe, againſt

gainst seeming objections, is great grace 194
Despise carnall reasons double dealing, as fast as she despises the simplicity of grace, 208
Deny self ease for Gods ease, 368
Deserters and discouragers of such Ministers of God as they are bound to, are blameable, 389. *All partiall lovers, passionate lovers, indirect lovers, vain-glorious lovers, false-hearted lovers, second hand and pinching lovers of the Minister to be taxed* ibid.
Such as are at defiance and hatred of their Ministers, are odious, 399
Dalliers with the Gospel, or attenders upon it for a season, reproved, 489
Delight in obeying the sad Commands of God, affords solid comfort, 550
Dispensation against the power of truths, is a great sin of our times. 553. *Sundry instances mentioned,* ibid
Declining of the temper of our times in zeale to the Gospel justly to bee bewailed, 884

E.

Earthinesse of our mould and nature, one cause why God fills the Scriptures with strange and rare wonders, 2
One errour in a weighty businesse being admitted, brings on many, 248. *Reasons and instances to clear the point,* ibid. *One, a pitch taken against the minister: 2. Vnquietnesse in marriage: 3. Neglect of debts at first: 4. The not curbing of the tongue. Objection against it and answer thereto* ibid.
Speciall errours to bee avoided, 255
The ease of grace how it is wrought, and to whom it belongs. Vide *Obeying the Gospel.*
The Ease of the first mercy ought not to beget slighting of it, 370. *But rather to binde the heart to God* ibid. *The Ease of mercy should for ever make Gods yoke seem easie,* ibid. *And teach us experience for time to come,* 372
Esteeme of Gods Minister ought to bee pretious. Reasons of it: 1. It is Gods charge: 2. Both the message which hee brings, and worke hee performes: 3. Because hee is the pleage of publicke peace 379. *Wherein this love and esteeme stands,* ibid. viz. *in honour, scale of Ministery, service, Maintenance,* 383
Examples of such as having long lyen under distresse of conscience, yet at last were comforted, 459
Evangelicall preparations to faith, of two sorts, Negative or Positive, Both of them treated of 478
Exhortation to obey and consent to the command and promise of God by beleeving, ibid.
Extent of a command, wherein it stands, in five or six things. 579
Enlargers of promises beyond their due bounds, to be reproved, 581
Exhortation to get the Spirit of true grace and conversion to God, 886 *And such as have attained the same, to stand fast therein,* ibid. *Urging of it upon all sorts and conditions, and especially his owne congregation,* ibid.

F.

Favour of Nature in a civill person, how many wayes it may be enlarged: As by the Lawes of men, education, examples of abstinent and morall persons, 104. 105
We must be Fools ere wee can become wise to salvation, 232
Faith the onely eye to behold the mysteries of salvation 234
Faithfulnesse is the center whence all the

the graces of a ſervant are derived 296
Faithfull ſervants may hee comforted, 314. foure or five particulars of encouragement, ibid.
Faithfull ones in greater things will much more be ſo in ſmaller, 427 Reaſons of it, ibid. Explications of the point, two or three, 429
Faith what it is not, what it is, how wrought: ſee the particulars, 480. It may be where aſſurance is not, ibid. Why it is called obedience and conſent, 486
Faith a moſt pretious thing in the nature of it, 495. Shee hath the preregatiue of all other graces of the Spirit, ibid. and that in ſundry reſpects. ibid.
Faith conſiſts of two parts, Selfe-renouncing, and Selfe-reſigning. Read at large of both, ibid.
Feare of God a ſingular meane to keep the heart cloſe to God, 559
Faith in applying of promiſes how to be practiſed in our ſeverall needs & diſtempers: 1 in the return of old guilt and accuſation after mercy obtained: 2. In ſome eclipſing of Gods gracious preſence, and walking darkly and deadly: 3. Feare of falling into ſome ſcandall and never perſevere: 4. In ſickneſſe, poverty, loſſes and croſſes, enemies, unfaithfull friends the proſperity of the bad: 5. Not hearing of thy prayers: 6. Troubles above other mens perſecutions, &c. Feare of death. 584
Faith in promiſes and performances, is a moſt pretious jewel, and why. 612
True faith is performing faith, and how, ibid. yea, when ſhee is at the loweſt, ibid.
Faith in performances muſt bee ſet on worke three wayes: 1. To take meaſure of the promiſes: 2. To looke upon God for performance: 3. To ſtrengthen it ſelfe by experience, 615. Contrary, miſery of unbeliefe. Vide Vnbeliefe. 616
Falſe cures have a falſe ſpirit, the remedy whereof is worſe then the diſeaſe, 864

G.

Grace is free, proved and diſcourſed and cleared, 9. 10. Objections anſwered: As firſt, this were to tranſlate a crime upon God: 2. Man hath liberty left him to receive grace, or refuſe: 3. God will not be wanting to ſuch as are not wanting to themſelves: 4. Grace is univerſall, as the fall is: 5. Elſe God ſhould require obedience of man to that which hee never gave him power to doe: 6. Chriſt the ſecond Adam, was fully and in all points contrary to the firſt Adam, and as the offence was, ſo is grace: 7. How elſe ſhall a Miniſter diſpence the Goſpel aright? 8. Elſe God doth unjuſtly in making the remedy worſe then the diſeaſe; or in offering it deceitfully to ſuch as hee hath fore-barred: 9. From the inſtance of a Prince offering pardon, &c. 10. The diverſitie in men ariſeth from themſelves, from page 11. to page 14.
God is not tied to us in outward bleſſings or protection, 23. Nor yet in like meaſures of grace, except we beleeve and pray, 24. Nor yet in a like adminiſtration of his Church in proſperity, ibid. becauſe of her ſinnes, ibid.
Gods courſes and ſeaſons in drawing home men, are divers and manifold, 26
Gods will double, and the difference, ibid.
Gods way in converting any, is chiefly to ſubdue carnall favour to the obedience of Chriſt. 59

God useth silly instruments to doe great things: or, if great, then either he makes them great of meane, or else mean in their owne eyes, 67
God delights to confound great ones by small and poore things, 68
God is jealous of his own glory, ibid.
God useth mean instruments to doe his worke, and why, ibid. & 71
Gifts and graces of themselves do no more cause pride in such as have them, then ignorance causeth humility, 73
Godly Ministers must not onely use, but also lay downe and renounce their service for God, if hee shall call them to it, 78
Grace is best accepted by sueh as are most empty of it, 154
Gods people who have shot the gulfe of Self in conversion, must also deny themselves in conversation, 183. Causes why so few deny themselves for Christ, ibid.
Gods people must not bee ashamed, or weary of sincerity, because of carnall worldlings, 185
Godly Christians must so hate carnal reason, that they also shun just aspersion of foolishnesse. 213
God befooles carnall reason, 226
God himselfe and the Word justifie policie. Vide policy.
Grounding upon stable principles of truth, necessary for each Christian, 254. Good grounds must bee laid at first, 256
Gods people must beware of the boasting of ungrounded hypocrites, 260
Godly themselves so farre as led by Selfe, when they are defeated, rage. 268. yet with difference from hypocrites, ibid.
Gods hearers will bee at Gods dispose for blessing, 273
Great men must submit their great spirits meekly to God, 274
God hath speciall reason to delay his work in the conversion of his, 282
God will never lin with his owne, till he have throughly tamed their rebellion, 291
God stands countable to good servants, 295
Grace adds all qualifications to a servant, 295. As first, wisedome to behold God the authour of all relations: 2. Subjection of spirit, which consists of two branches: 1. Selfe-denniall: 2. Serviceablenesse, ibid. It sets faith on worke three wayes: 1. Purging out such distempers as possesse them: 2. Furnisheth it with speciall gifts: 3. Puts it into actual exercise, 301
Grace is easie to them who are bred for it, 363
How it is called a burden, and how ease, ibid.
God looks that his servants should do some singular thing for him, 395
Gods counsels most sincere of all, 424
Gods faithfulnesse to us in the main things, must teach us to trust him in the smaller, 433
God hath a season, wherein at last he accomplisheth the worke of grace in his elect 439
When as God is that to the soule, which formerly sinne and vanity have been, it's a signe that the soule is resigned up to God, 500
Gods commands exceed mans in point of unlimitednesse and soveraignty, 524
Gods remedies are perfect, but mans are crazie 587
God over-rules the silly creature, to worke great effects above it selfe, 590
Gods performances are alway as good, if not better then his promises. Reasons of it: 1. Because he is Iehova, the being of all the promises: 2. In respect of his honor: 3. Whatsoever is in God, is eminently so: 4. For strengthning his

his ſervants to claſp cloſely with his promiſes: 5. Becauſe the Lord promiſeth nothing, but what hee firſt purpoſed to performe: 6. Becauſe hee meaſures his promiſes, not according to our capacity, but his owne bounty, from page 595. to 598.

Gods performing of promiſes to bee underſtood with limitations. What thoſe bee. Three in number: viz. 1. Hee performes them, yet not in that very kinde wherein the ſoule expects: 2. In generall promiſes to the Church, the time of performance muſt bee left to God: 3. God performes to his, but then they muſt live uprightly, and keep their covenant, not elſe, ibid. The Vſes: 1. Gods people looke more at the good of a performance, then the bare performance it ſelfe: 2. We muſt not taxe Gods adminiſtrations: 3. They who breake with God, muſt looke that God break with them, 598. 599

God muſt be left to himſelfe for the performing of promiſes, without our mixing of our wits and wills therewith, 606

Gods faithfulneſſe in keeping promiſe with us, muſt teach us to bee faithfull to others in keeping promiſe, 607

Gods people ought to bee encouraged, thankfull and comforted for the Lords faithfull performing of promiſes: Alſo humbled for their provoking of God to the contrary, 618

H.

Heathen ſtories fall ſhort of thoſe rarities and wonders of the Scriptures, 4

Husbands and wives muſt abhorre carnall reaſon, 220

Humbleneſſe in Gods way, a ſpeciall grace, 463

Hypocrites who come with their coſt and toyle to God, rejected, 365

Hypocrites and elect ones differ in the iſſue of their labours, 453

True Humility ſcornes not to learne of the meaneſt Teachers, 460

Humility alway goes before grace, 464

Moſt Hearers abide in unbeliefe, becauſe their hearts were never humbled, 466

Humbled ſoules comforted, 469

Hypocrites falſe grounds in breaking of Gods commands, diſcovered, 528. The trickes and wayes whereby they defend it, ibid. ſix or ſeaven of them: The 1. By avoyding their realneſſe: 2. By avoyding conviction: 3. By diminiſhing the extent: 4. By oppoſing one command to another: 5. By falſe plea of examples: 6. By adding of new commands of their owne: 7. By cavilling againſt the ſtrictneſſe of Gods, ibid to page 531.

I.

Iewes ſtrangely inſenſible of God in the middeſt of all his miracles, 4

The trueſt Iudgement of a mans eſtate, is rather what corruption he wants, then gifts which he hath, or graces he ſeemes to have, 60

Inſtances of much folly and indiſcretion in the dealings of Chriſtians, 213

Irreſolution in matter of Religion, as dangerous as groſſe blindneſſe, 254

Inferiors if gracious, are a great convincement to ſuperiors, 288

Inferiors being to deale with ſuperiors, muſt conſider what their perſons will beare, 329

Iudge not raſhly of Gods adminiſtrations, either publicke, or perſonall diſpenſings of grace with difficulty or eaſe, 376

Iudgement of controverſall truths to be aſcribed to men of moſt ſincerity: who theſe are. 414
Inconſtancy and diſproportion in mens affections and actions, argues falſhood, 435
Inferiors muſt not withdraw their ſervice from their ſuperiors, if God call them to it, 461. *Perſwaſions to it,* ibid.
The Ingredients of a promiſe, ſerving to inable and improve it, 483. *five or ſix of them,* ibid.
Iudgements of God upon carnall and wilfull unbeleevers, 494
Intention & extenſion of commands, what. Vide *Extent,* 521.522
Inferiors muſt enquire into the lawfulneſſe of their ſuperiors commands, and not obey implicitly, 524
Inferiors muſt not follow the commands of ſuperiors to break Gods commands, 527. *eſpecially the command of the Sabbath,* ibid.
Iudgement of God upon hollow-hearted diſpenſers with his commands, 530
Iordens waters (though no Type) yet a reſemblance of Baptiſme, 592
Indifferency and neutrality of Spirit, worſe then open prophaneneſſe, 868. *and uſually it growes to it,* ibid.
Ieſuiticall equivocation to be abhorred, and upon what grounds, 240

L.

Letter of the Scripture not to be wreſted againſt the ſenſe for mens private ends, 58
Love and honour of Gods Prophets, appeares in this, that we obey their voyce. Reaſons of it, 397
Lovers of the Miniſter in the generall, yet concealers of their errors, corruptions, to be reproved, 401
Lets of faith to bee ſeriouſly abhorred, five or ſix of them mentioned, 502
Leſſer light in faith may yet goe with greater aſſurance 513
The Law how far it's ſtrengthened or weakned by the Goſpel, 523
Lets of cloſe walking with God to be abhorred, 550. *eight or nine of them named,* ibid.
Limiters and reſtrainers of promiſes are to be reproved, 580. *Sundry inſtances,* ibid.
All Lets of performing the promiſes of God, to be ſtudiouſly ſhunned, 113. *What theſe are:* 1. *Miſtaking of performances:* 2. *Carnality and deadneſſe of heart:* 3. *Murmuring:* 4. *Some groſſe ſinne:* 5. *Limiting of God:* 6. *Errour of the wicked:* 7. *Unobſervance:* 8. *Curioſity, or cenſure with others,* ibid.

M.

Miracles ſerve to convince the ſoule of the truth of God ſealed thereby, 5
Miracles how farre ceaſed, uncertaine to us, and in Gods hand, ibid
Miniſters muſt be jealous of the leaſt aſperſion to Gods glory, to their owne perſons, or of offence to others by their carriage. 58
Man very prone to idolize meanes, and to ſet them up in Gods place, 68
Miniſters muſt not abuſe their parts to caſe and pampering of the fleſh, 75
Markes of fleſhly wiſedome ſubdued: foure or five. See pag. 81.82.83.
Miniſters muſt bee firſt in Selfe-denyall: It is the true Mortmaine, 164.165.
Miniſters of all others muſt abandon carnall reaſon, and that in many things mentioned, 215

Magistrates must beware of carnall reason, 220
Markes of Selfe defeated, to teach us to avoid it: 1. *Shee is coy and queasie upon reproofe*: 2. *Lazie and slothfull to amend*: 3. *Alway in her extremities*: 4. *Partiall*, 263
Meane silly persons if godly, need not thinke themselves contemptible, 289
Masters must chuse their servants by this mark of faithfulnesse, 310
Masters must bee Fathers to their Servants, 315. *Reasons of it*: 1. *They have betaken themselves under their protection*: 2. *They are as children to thee in point of fidelity*, ibid. *Wherein this duty stands*: 1. *In preparation*: 2. *In performance. Both in sundry Branches*: 1. *See and adore Providence in ruling thy servants for thee*: 2. *Manage thy servants with thy best skill*: 3. *Give his soule her portion as well as his body*: 4. *Feed his eye by thy example*: 5. *Command in the Lord*: 6. *Impose not violence in lawfull things, through excesse*: 7. *Conceale not his painfulnesse*: 8. *Defend him from hurt*: 9. *Carry an equall hand among servants*: 10. *Neglect him not at his departure*, ibid. 320
Ministers must not count the worke of setling the conscience, a slight worke, 332. *Helpes for the enabling the Minister to it*, ibid. *Exhortation to it, both by preparation and practice. Rules for it in speciall*: 1. *Discerne mixt sorrow from single, and separate them*; *and Diabolicall temptations from our own feares, whether moderate or excessive*: *whether terrors proceed from sin properly, or fame evil of punishment*; *whether the heart rebell under conviction, or no*: 2. *Defeare not the season, search out the speciall let which holds the soule from the condition*; *or being under it, from faith*. 4. *Upon revolts what to doe. Whence the particular trouble arises*, ibid.
Ministers must not bee distrustfull of God, in the execution of their place, 384. *Snare not their consciences*; *Distrouour not their persons, or disable themselves in doing good to the people*, ibid. *And set himselfe cheerfully on worke to feed and rule them*, ibid. 387
Ministers reproach themselves much by ascribing too much to such people as are unsound, 407
Ministers must love the people for no sinister ends, but for obedience to the truth, 409
Ministers who will purchase interest in their people, must forgoe some of their owne right, 412
Magistrates, Ministers, and all Governors must be sincere in their censures. 416. *See them reckoned up there. Motives to it*, ibid.
Popish Mortification discovered to be hypocriticall, 431
Ministers should gaster lewd people out of those errors that harden them, 485
Motives to faith sundry, 505. *First faith gives most glory to God*: 2. *Christs last enquiry will be for faith*: 3. *God will be admired in all, and onely beleevers*: 4. *God shall come in vengeance against all unbeleevers*: 5. *Faith is a rare Iewell*: 6. *No riddance of our distempers till wee beleeve*, ibid. 510
Ministers must not prostitute their authority to the backing of such commands as are against God, 524
Markes and prooses of the liberty and

and dispensations which men take for sin: 1. *Their number,* 2. *Their cunning.* 3. *Carnall counsell,* 4. *Their questions,* 5. *Their wits,* 6. *Their malice,* 7. *Their partiality,* 8. *Their baseneſſe,* ibid. 554 555

Wee muſt mourne for ſuch as have forſaken their cloſeneſſe in obeying God, 556. *Much more for our owne looſneſſe in that kinde,* ibid. *A ſhort form of ſuch a complaint,* ibid.

Meanes helping the ſoule to cloſe obedience, 562. *as firſt, Faith in Chriſt our Law-giver:* 2. *Due meditation of the object of obedience:* 3. *Mark examples of cloſeneſſe:* 4. *Prayer,* 5. *Humilitie,* 6. *Obſerve Gods judgements* 7. *And thinke of his rewards,* 8. *Selfe-denial,* ibid.

Miſery of ſuch as reſt in falſe Cures, and an unſound condition, 864

N.

Nature of old Adam *inſenſible and unperceivable of holy things, and the more holy the worſe, eſpecially myſteries,* 1

Naamans *ſtory, and the paſſages thereof, very remarkable, pag* 7

Particulars of it, ibid.

Number of ſeven very holy with Papiſts, but in it ſelfe no better then others, 65

Novices in grace muſt know there be many difficulties in getting it, and not be diſmaid. 92

Novices looke not at the troubles for time to come, but onely at the preſent, 95

None ſo bad, but have ſome good, 105. *and what abuſe the civill perſon makes of it,* ibid.

Nouriſh no ſuch dregges in us, as by which carnall reaſon might bee ſupported, 210. *Sundry of theſe noted,* ibid. *And ten more of abettors to this ſin, noted after,* ibid

Newters, Atheiſts, &c. terrified, 347

Nouriſh not your feares about the way of God, 374. *and counſels againſt this diſeaſe,* ibid.

O.

Obedience to the command of faith is eaſie, 357. *Clearing it by anſwer to the objections of hypocrites, by reaſons,* ibid. *As* 1. *In reſpect of the difficult way of the Law:* 2. *In reſpect of a further thing aimed at by the Lord,* viz. *the recovery of his Image:* 3. *In reſpect of the merit and price of it:* 4. *In reſpect of the diſpenſation of it:* 5. *In reſpect of that grace which accompanies all under the condition,* ibid. *The particular meanes by which the Lord makes faith eaſie to his people,* ibid. *Such as have found eaſe in this way, muſt be thankfull,* 369

Obedience of love to the Miniſter urged in ſundry inſtances, 405

Occaſionall and temporary commands, binde as ſtrongly for the preſent, as the morall and perpetuall doe, 516

P.

God prevents ſuch by his providence and miniſtring meanes, and occaſions, whom he means to ſave, 41. *Both to his Church ingeneral, and each member. Reaſons foure or five. The ends are his, therefore the meanes; elſe Gods purpoſe ſhould hang upon man. The end ordereth the whole frame of the action,* ibid.

Gods preventions, in what kinde and manner they lye, 44

Gods preventions and mans forecaſt differ much, ibid.

Six preventions of God named: 1. *God over-rules, diverts & alters our*

intents, to sway unto his. ibid. 2. *Overpowers the soule from stumbling at discouragements.*45. 3. *Disposeth of all occasions, and antecedents.* ibid. 4. *Accommodates all things to sort to his owne ends.* 46. 5. *Removes such things as he foresees would hinder.* ibid. 6. *Especially inspires the meanes, and blesseth them to the attaining of their effect.* 47

To want all Preventing grace, and to live as a dead blocke, very fearfull. 47. 48

Preventing grace of God deserves adoring and thanks at our hands. 49. *and praier.* ibid.

Passages of preventing providence. 50

Preventions of God should humble us. ibid. 51

Daliying with them causeth God to blast us. 48. 52

Preventions past should arme us against feare of corruptions prevailing. 52, 53

Popish insolency of the Clergy over Gods people intollerable. 57

Proud nature of man quickly forgets humiliation 63

Popish stately devotion, odious to God. 79

Proud Hypocrites disdaine to bee taught by meane ones. 80

Priviledges of Religion keepe many from being truly Religious, what it is, and how dangerous. 115

Pharisees terrified. 148

Professors unsound in peace, will much more bee rotten in triall 211

People must abhor carnall reason as well as Ministers, and in what. 216

Parents and Governours ought to beware of carnall reason. 219

Phisitians beware of Atheisme. 220

Prejudice an abettor of carnall reason. 220

Popery notoriously tainted with carnall reason, and wherein, three instances. 222. 223

Practise of carnall reason reproved in all sorts, twelve of them noted 227

Policy though it may appeare to some to be sinfull, yet may be warrantable, 241. *and wherein, six or seven instances propounded,* ibid. *upon what tearme.* ibid.

Proud pharisees alway most ready to taxe others of pride who are innocent. 261

Preventing Grace cannot be severed from assisting in such as are saved. 279. *The reasons of the point: wherein this assistance stands.* 281

Papists put us downe for government. 311

People must take heed lest they turne their eare from counsell of their Ministers, 335. *counsels tending thereto, three or foure,* ibid.

Putters off of the promise to bee reproved. 352

Preachers who sow pillowes most odious, and to be abhorred. 368

Pelagian ease of free-will and selfe-conversion confuted. ibid.

Pitty such as get to heaven with much difficulty. 370

Pray for five things to make Religion sweet: 1. *Acceptance of the will for the deed.* 2. *Looke upon thine owne grace, and hide my defects.* 3. *Betrust me with the principles of sincerity and faith, working by love, which will make a little goe a great way.* 4. *Make my lusts to be my clogs, as* Sauls *armour to* David. 5. *Make the yoke of hard, dangerous, disgraced, solemne duties and crosses to be tollerable.* 374

People exhorted to love, honour and support their Ministers. How that

that may bee, 392
People that will seeme to love their Minister, that so they may snort in their sinnes, odious, 400
Popish Martyrs against the Scriptures not to be regarded, notwithstanding their pretended selfe-deniall. 415. *Popish falshood in all their wayes,* 415
People must be sincere and open to receive good counsell, 425
Poore men have a priviledge above the rich in this, That they may bee reproved, 425
Proud hearts terrified by Gods resisting, 468
Plead hard for faith, if once wee bee under the condition, 481
Promise must be pleaded for sanctification as well as pardon. 511
Perseverance in beleeving, breeds assurance. 513
Promises must bee beleeved according to their nature and kinde. 567. *Reasons of it.*
Popish abusers of promises terrified. 579
Preposterous appliers of promises, reproved. 582
Promises must be beleeved according to the utmost extent of them: wherin it stands, in three things, 1. *A promise must bee sounded to the bottome:* 2. *Wee must draw out of the wells of salvation.* 3. *The promise must not bee given over, though wee be long held off,* 583. 584
Physitians must know themselves to be only instruments of providence, for such as God will have to recover, 588
People are very fond in magnifying the outward instrument, neglecting God, ibid.
Popish Miracles and Cures what they are to be thought of, 590
Pelagian spirits which cavill at the freedome of the grace of God, far from the true spirit of cure and conversion, 869. *So are Popish spirits likewise,* 870
Prayer for healing the numb palsie of the spirit of our times, necessary, 886

Q.

Quarrellers against the Minister, for not comforting the distressed, sinfull, 456

R.

Rebellion in all whom God meanes to save, shall worke greater humiliation in them, 60
Repentance goes not before faith, 103
Religious Selfe how dangerous. Vide *Selfe.*
Rationall carriage, not simply to bee condemned, 209
Religion stands more in wanting somewhat, then in having, 237
Religion is like an harmony, 250
Religion grounded upon most sound foundations, 253
Religious servants yet failing in faithfulnesse, are to bee blamed 306. *Their trickes and qualities,* ibid.
Resigning up of the soule to God, is one chiefe work of faith, 500
Revolters from their first zeale and grace of conversion, are in a sad case, 871

S.

Scriptures filled by the holy Ghost, with rarities and wonders, and why: Two causes, 2. 3
Sensible and outward objects the meanes by which God workes upon us, ibid.
Scriptures bark and outside not to be rested in, but the scope and sense, 6
Soveraignty of Gods will and pleasure, must cause us first to confesse

it, 14. 2. To lye humbly and quietly under the conviction of it, 15. in sundry particulars: 1. By considering the root of this soveraignty, ib. 2. Bee content that God dispence his grace according to his owne measures, 16. 3. Iudge not God in the effects of soveraignty, as in the sinnes, penalties, or snares of the wicked, ibid. 6. Nor for punishing the sinnes of parents upon their posterity, 17. 7. Doe the uttermost that lies in thee to obey, ibid. 8 Be charitable to others a farre off, ibid. 9. Break thy hard heart hereby, & lay down thy pride and rebellion, 18. Then the same soveraignty is free to save as well as destroy, 19. Look not at election but at the free offer, ibid. Assay to beleeve, and that upon sound warrant by venturing upon the promise, 20. 21. Lastly, know this is the greatest honour which thou canst doe to God, 22

Straits and extremities are Gods season to pull downe a proud heart, 29. In how many respects. See the reasons, ibid.

Straits both publick and personall, do but little humble men in these times, 36. 37

Straits doe make hypocrites onely to counterfeit, 33. Not to be trusted, ibid.

Straits are very unpleasing to flesh, we are loath to heare of them lest wee should humble our selves and profit by them, 38

Shun not straits: for first, it is boot-lesse; and then, they cannot bee missed, 39. Pray for an holy use of them, not to awe thee violently, but change thy heart, 40

Signes and Sacraments why used by the Lord in effecting spirituall things, 85

Sacraments differ from common signes, ibid. And why. 1. To stop mans bold inventions: 2. To assure weake faith of his sincerity, ibid.

Suspect trials bee comming upon us, when our state is calmest, 96

The manifold snares in the way of Gods people, should make them watch and bee armed, ibid.

Selfe the main enemy to rob the soule of grace, when all is done, 98. and why; because most inward and immediate, 101

Selfe in the root of it, is nothing but the instinct of old Adam, and the frame or vent of a corrupt heart, ibid.

Selfe of two sorts; either opposite Selfe to Christ, or mixing Selfe with Christ, ibid.

Selfe opposite, what. ibid. Of how many sorts it is, ibid. Five named, Prophane selfe, Naturall selfe, Carnall selfe, Creature selfe, Religious selfe, ibid.

Selfe prophaneneſſe described, ibid.

Self natural or civill described, 164

Carnall selfe, or savour of the flesh, what The sorts of it many, ibid.

Selfe sensuality, or in the Creature, what. 111

Selfe-religion what. The branches of it three. 115

Mixt selfe, in what particulars it discovers her selfe 121. Ten or twelve mentioned,

Nature of mixt selfe discerned in foure things, 1. Familiarneſſe, 2. Generalneſſe, 3. Violence, 4. Tenaciousneſſe, 127

Selfe supports her selfe by false comparisons, 128

Satan imbarkes himselfe more deeply in Selfe, then in other corruption, 129

Self deludes, by Gods just giving her over to her selfe, 129

Selfe may be discerned by three degrees or properties, ibid.

Passages of Selfe may bee conceived three wayes: 1. *By the ground*: 2. *The carriage*: 3. *The scope*, 131
Selfe is but flesh in all the worke of Law and Gospel, and how, 132
Carriage of Selfe is suitable to her ground; which appeares in foure things: 1. *Her instinct*: 2. *Her eagernesse*: 3. *Her endeavour*: 4. *Her disappointment*, ibid.
The ends of Selfe and her scope, is suitable to the ground and carriage, 138
All seekers of salvation must abhorre Selfe, and how: 1. *In discerning her trickes, divers of them mentioned*, 139. *Shee will deny herselfe in somewhat, to satisfie herselfe in other things*: 2. *To maske sin under holinesse*: 3. *To defile it selfe in that it knoweth*: 4. *Pretence to seeke God, but intending it selfe*: 5. *To offer God more service then he askes.*
Self forfeits all her travell & labour for nothing, 140. *Shee is of an outlasting and surviving nature*, 143. *Shee is very close and hard to be discerned*, 144
Selfe a perpetuall enemy to the Regenerate themselves, 146. *making their lives sad and uncomfortable*, ibid.
If Selfe in the painfull Professor bee so dangerous, what shall become of the prophane? 147
Selfe exceeds grosse lusts, 149
The mischiefe of Selfe should teach us not to bee offended with afflictions and sorrasives to eat it out, ibid.
Staggering, Non-proficiencie, and unthriftinesse of Professors, is the fruit of selfe, 152
Selfe requires deepe searching, to discover it in the soule, 155
A Question: Doe all that are truly converted, discover Selfe in themselves thus? Ans. Two or three wayes 156.157.158
Motives to selfe-deniall, sundry, ib.
Spirit of Grace, what it is, 168.170. *Exhortation to ensue it, as the opposite of the spirit of Selfe*, ibid. *Markes of it*, ibid. *The* 1. *Grace causes the soul to grow more humble by knowledge*: 2. *Grace subordinates all to her selfe*: 3. *It subjects the soule to Christ upon his owne termes*: 4. *It resists the speciall and personall pangs of Selfe in each soule*: 5. *It answers all objections of Selfe*: 6. *It sets Selfe against Selfe*, ibid.
Spirit of Grace serves all in all for Grace, and how. Three wayes: 1. *In the discovery of it*: 2. *In the effects of that discovery*: 3. *In the end of it*, 178
Spirit of grace proceeds on calmly in the soule, contrary to selfe, 181
The soule bereft of that puritie of Reason in which it was created, 202
The Spirit of God must create holy wisedome in stead of carnall in the soule, 203
Savour spirituall things, 235. *The meanes and markes of it five*: 1. *Savour the powerfullest ordinances*: 2. *Love simplicity*: 3. *Get heavenly mindednesse*: 4. *Preferre the verdict of the Word*: 5. *Be wise in thy converse*, 236
Silly and simple ones have an advantage of wiser in point of carnall reason, 236
Selfe is proud and coy, 259
Selfe in her owne way very jolly; but out of her element, crabbed, 260
Selfe defeated, rageth, 265. *Sundry reasons*, ibid. *Object. How then is it that hypocrites are so merry? Answered*, ibid.
Selfe may want defeats, because

given over by God, to deluſion and hardening, 269
Self-willed ones, who binde God to their hearings, convinced, 269
Superiors learn grace of their inferiors, 290
Servants muſt bee faithfull to their maſters, 294
Servants onely can bee well bred in Chriſts family, 296
The ſetling of a diſtreſſed heart by counſell, is a mercy highly to bee prized, 330
Selfe and carnall reaſon are juſtly reproveable corruptions, and why. 343. to 346.
Sinners againſt ſenſible and ocular mercies preſent, are worſe then thoſe who ſin againſt the abſent promiſes, 349. Divers ſorts of ſuch, ibid.
Slighters of grace under pretence of eaſe, terrified, 364
Seaſon of eaſe to beleeve, is at firſt, 366. Hard to recover it if once loſt, 367
Scorners of Gods Miniſters reproved, 388
Satan, who ſeekes our blood, can perſwade us to more coſt for him, then Chriſt who ſhed his blood for us, 396
Sincerity in a Counſellor, claimes acceptance. Reaſons why, 410
The Sufficiency of a promiſe, is the next object of faith, 482
Schiſmaticks who reject all ſteps and marks of converſion, confuted, 488
The Spirit of Truth muſt bee the firſt planter of truth in the ſoule, 577
Sacraments divinely appropriated to ſeal up to the ſoule the aſſurance of ſalvation, 592. Therefore not to be counted common things by the people, nor uſed ſo by parents, ibid.
Spirituall penalties attend ſpirituall ſins, 604
A ſpirit of ſinne in a man, what, and how dangerous it is, 866. eſpecially if conceited of her owne welfare, ibid.
Spirit of grace, by what marks it may be tried: Generally by her owne working, particularly by theſe marks: 1. Shee is bred of the immortall ſeed of the Word, and all falſe conceptions caſt out: 2. By her operations: 3. By the frame and ſoundneſſe of it: 4. By the object, order and equality of it: 5. by the carriage of it, 879
Separatiſts from our Church, & the corruptions of it, how blinde in diſcerning their owne, 882
Selfe-deniall urged in generall by many motives and meanes of direction, 162
Self-deniall in point of ſanctification, urged by the diſcovery of 4 or 5 falſe ſemblances, & falſe principles thereof, with ſome meanes, ib. Read at large the whole Tract.

T.

Trials are to ſeparate the pretious from the vile, in the godly. 95 See Difficulties.
Gods trials ſhould work in us the ſpirit of prevention, care to keep our peace, and much prayer to bee kept from temptation, 97
Gods ends in tempting, unlike to Satans, ibid.
Terror to all that cleave to carnall reaſon, Pelagians and others, 225
Thanks due to God for freedom from this tyrant of Carnall reaſon, 238
Try thy ſelfe, how defeating of thy ſelfe workes with thee, 276
To be truſted by our betters, is honourable, 294
Triall of ſervants by 6 rules, whether faithfull or not: 1. It muſt be according to the word and knowledge: 2. muſt not be contrary to it: 3. It muſt be ſingle & ſincere: 4. Muſt not croſſe the Law of Pietty, love or mercy: 5. It muſt bee equall and regular: 6. It muſt be diligent

diligent and sedulous, 307
Touchable and tractable natures in shew to take counsel, yet persisting in their sin, are dissemblers, 402
Tokens of love in other kinds offered to the Minister, where obedience followes not, are false, 406
Terror to all despisers of sincere counsell, 422. Their woe and misery, 422, 424
Terror to all such as live prophanely, and yet thinke themselves under the condition of mercy, 486
Terror to all that savour not the spiritualnesse of faith, 492
Terror to all that wilfully cast off the yoke of Gods commands, 528. where foure things are handled, ibid. 1. their grounds, 2. their practice, 3. their shifts and colours, 4. application of terror, 529
Trials of close obedience to commands, 539. 1. It is truly inquisitive after the extent of commands: 2. It is tender in affection towards commands: 3. It is aware of disobedience by each experiment of sin: 4. It rejoyceth in the voice of the Word, determining of her doubtfull cases: 5. It looks more at the preserving of a command entire, then at her owne ends: 6. It sets not Gods commands together by the ears: 7. He sawes himselfe harmlesse in all losses for obedience sake, upon God by faith: 8. It closes with commands without colours or cavils: 9. In such duties as border upon her owne respects, she is carried to obey upon Gods grounds: 10. It groweth better and better: 11. It seekes to amend the errours of others: 12. It obeyes when yet there appeares not outward fruit of it: 13. It profits by lively experience of former obeying: 14. It is obedient in her particular conditiō of life: 15. It seekes after no dispensations, ibid. to 548.
Truths of God must not bee taken by tradition and prejudice, but from the whole body of truth beleeved as Gods, 576
Terror to all Popish and blinde maintainers of truth upon false grounds, 577
Terror to all such as nourish in themselves most open and odious diseases, seeking no cure, 866
Triall of the true spirit of Grace, is from herselfe, 878

V.

Vnbeliefe of the Word so much the more damnable, by how much it hath been confirmed so by miracles, 5
Vnconditionall call of God, what. 10. Why and how it is free, ibid.
Vnfaithfull servants terrified, 301. Wherein it consists: sundry particulars, ibid.
Vowers first what they will doe, and then enquirers of the Minister for counsell, are dissemblers, 401
It bewrayes great Vnfaithfulnesse, to bee very forward in great duties, and backward in small, 430
Vnequall and unsound persons in their course, not to be trusted, 436
To be at an Vtter strait, and brought to a forlorne hopelesse condition, is one step to faith, 499
Vnapt appliers of promises, or of other parts of the Word, reproved, 582
Vnproportioned meanes used by men without a Word, to effect supernaturall things, are evill, and justly suspected, 590
Vnbeliefe bindes the armes of God from performing promises, 613
Vnbeliefe cannot beteame her selfe that bounty in performances, which is in God, 616. with amplification of the point, ibid.

Word

W.

Word and voice of Gods own mouth, onely able to pierce the soule, 62
Yet the Word workes little without crosses in these dayes, 64
Wise men must learne to bee fooles in Gods matters, that they may bee wise, 75
Mens will and minde more to them, then the world beside s, 163
Word of God must be cast as seed into the soule, when once empty of her selfe, 233
Wisdome to guide a Christians course how gotten, and wherein it stands, in 5. or 6. properties. 1. Chuse that one thing necessary 2. Discerne betweene things that differ. 3. Bee ready for the hardest. 4. Make safe thy retreat. 5. Feare God, which is the fountaine of it. 6. Shun the wayes of error 7. Practise wisdome both in deliberation and determination. 1. Being wise chiefly for thy selfe. 2. Redeeme the time. 3. Plot and project wisely for God. 4. Be watchfull against all enemies, especially spirituall. 5. Meddle with thy owne businesse. 6. In all doubtfull cases look to that which is purest, comliest, and of best report. 7. Of 2. morall evills, chuse neither, but of a morall sin, and a penalty, chuse the latter. 8. Let things profitable or pleasing yeeld to things honest. 9. Try men or things ere thou trustest. 10. Be neither too credulous, nor too obstinate, ibid.
Wrathfull and habitually peevish and froward persons, reproved, 269. *Much more if defeated* ibid.
Waiting upon God, necessary for such as look to speed of grace, 274
Wisedome is needfull to judge aright of the ease of grace, 376
Weak beleevers must not quite quail and give over, 514

Z.

Zeale of first converts described, 871

LECTVRES

This Inſertion is to be placed in the thirteenth page of Naamans *Hiſtory, and the twentieth line, after the foure firſt words thereof, which are theſe* (but a cauſe of) *and ſo read on to the end of the ſaid Inſertion, and then return to the former thirteenth page and twentieth line, and proceed on with theſe words,* moral perſwaſion, &c.

procuring it, which were moſt abſurd: I ſay, Chriſt hereby ſhould bee made not the foundation of Election, as Epheſ. 1. in whom GOD eſtabliſhed it, but the fountaine of meriting it.

Anſwer 2. Secondly, I anſwer, though wee ſhould grant the parity, and make *Adam* and *Chriſt* alike in both; yet there be other reaſons to bee alledged of this parity, then this, viz. The equall number of the ſaved. For why? Three other reaſons may bee given of *Adam* and *Chriſts* equality; nay rather of *Chriſts* exceeding *Adam* in his grace: as firſt grace exceeds ſinne in reſpect of the value and eminencie of the perſon undergoing the worke of Redemption, viz. the eternall Son of GOD: Between whom and *Adam*, what compariſon? Sure in this, Grace is farre above the offence. Secondly, if wee reſpect the grace it ſelfe purchaſed in point of duration and continuance, *Adams* laſted but a while, being in his owne keeping; but grace of redemption is hid with God, and in Chriſt, to abide for ever. Thirdly, in point of the reward purchaſed by Chriſt; which (in reſpect of the tranſcendencie of the Meriter above the offence) reſtored not the redeemed onely to that they loſt, viz. an earthly Paradiſe, but an eternall glory in the heavens. I conclude then, Thoſe that make Chriſt the ſubject of univerſall grace for all and each one, who by the freedome of his will, aſſiſted thereby, will receive it, or reject it (catch who catch may) I ſay, theſe make Chriſt onely a wandring notion, at the pleaſure of each baſe wretch, not the ſolid foundation of election, as making the elect, and only them, happy.

Object. But if grace be not univerſall, then (ſay theſe) God deales unjuſtly, in offering a remedy upon worſe termes then the diſeaſe it ſelfe. For why? Hereby hee aggravates the contempt of all deſpiſers, cauſing their condemnation to be farre deeper then before; eſpecially knowing that it will prove ſo.

I anſwer: Firſt, it is accidentall to Gods offer of Grace, that the condemnation of the wicked is aggravated thereby. For it is not through his default, but theirs. His offer is directly to his own elect, but if the other will mixe themſelves, and abuſe this offer, their blood bee upon their heads. Put caſe a Prince offer his pardon to ten, of whom hee knowes nine will not accept it: is it his fault to offer it? or is he the cauſe of their contempt? Doth he infuſe it into them? No ſurely. Nay further, (to ſtop the mouth of all ſuch cavillers) this I adde, That God doth not hereby onely aggravate their judgement: for he doth by his Goſpel beſtow upon them many gifts of his Spirit, much reſtraint of ſinne, many mercifull allowances which others want, ſo that by this meanes their condemnation is leſſened.

Object. But ſtill it is objected, How can this Doctrine conſiſt with that bounty and abundance of mercy in God, who would have all repent and be ſaved? Offering fully, freely, to all ſorts, civil ones, profane, ſinfull and ignorant ones, mercy without difference? Doth not this abſolute ſoveraignty of God infringe it?

I anſwer, No, in no wiſe: The ſecret purpoſe of God within himſelfe, and the outward offer, differ as much, as the preſence Chamber of a Prince, and his privie Chamber. In the former, he ſheweth what hee hath done concerning the finall eſtate of his creature: In the latter, what he will have man doe, concerning his own ſalvation. Secrets are for God, revealed things are for us. God launches out into the deepe; but we muſt goe by the brinke and ſhore. The ſoveraigne freedome of God is not taught to diſhearten any in Gods way (for who knowes Gods laſt decree touching himſelfe) but to teach us to goe to worke with awe in Gods way, to feare him, to be humbled, ſubmitting our ſelves to his revealed will, with readineſſe, and without cavilling. For otherwiſe this ſoveraignty and freedome in God, hinders not his freedome of grace to allure, draw, perſwade, and ſoften the hearts of whom he will. But this will try men whether they will yeeld to the way of God, or kick againſt it, and ſo provoke wrath.

Object. But how can this ſtand with the Miniſters preaching of the promiſe to all ſorts, finding fault with the rejecters, and admoniſhing the backward? In a word, why doth he yet complaine?

I anſwer: The Miniſter is Gods inſtrument, to reveale Gods will to the people, but not his ſecrets. Hee muſt nakedly doe his office, and leave the effect to God, who workes grace in ſuch as ſubmit to him. He knowes not what God hath intended to any one wicked man. If any will cavill at him, his damnation is juſt, to reject Gods cords and ladder. As for Gods complaining, threatning, denouncing, it is no act contrary to his ſecret will, but onely divers from it. And it is a way which he bleſſeth to draw home thouſands to himſelfe.

Object. But others object, That the grace offered is one, and the ſame in it ſelfe ſaving: But the receiving of it is diverſe: Some receive it more cordially then others, and that's their owne free-will.

Anſwer. I anſwer: Doe they ſo? and what is it that cauſeth the one to be ſo cordiall, the other not? Is it univerſall grace? No ſurely: For then what hinders why all receive it not ſo, if the reaſon be meere

LECTVRES VPON THE Fifth Chapter of the Second Booke of the Kings, from the ninth verſe, to the fifteenth.

THE TEXT.

9 SO *Naaman came, and ſtood before the dore of Eliſha, with his horſes and charets.*

10 *And Eliſha ſent a meſſenger to him, ſaying, Go and waſh thee in Iordan ſeven times; and thy fleſh ſhall come againe unto thee, and thou ſhalt be cleane.*

11 *But Naaman was wroth and went away, and ſaid, Behold I thought, he will ſurely come out to me, and ſtand and call upon the Lord his God, and ſtrike his hand upon the place, and recover the leper.*

12 *Are not Abana and Pharfar, rivers of Damaſcus, better then all the waters of Iſrael? may I not waſh in them and be cleane? So he turned and went away in a rage.*

13 *And his ſervants came neer, and ſpake unto him, and ſaid, Father, if the Prophet had bid thee do ſome great thing, wouldſt thou not have done it? How much more then when he ſaith unto thee, waſh and be cleane?*

14 *Then went he down, and dipped himſelfe ſeven times in Iordan, according the ſaying of the man of God; and his fleſh came againe, as the fleſh of a little child, and he was cleane.*

15 *And he returned to the man of God, &c.*

2 Kings

THE FIRST LECTVRE VPON THE NINTH VERSE.

THE holy Ghost hath repleniſhed the whole body of the Scriptures, with more ſtrange and miraculous relations, then any pen of an humane writer could ever conceive, or comprehend. In which reſpect he may be called truly, the Father of Hiſtories. For why? Scarce we ſhall light upon any chapter in the hiſtory of the old or new Teſtament, (yea ſome Prophecies) wherein ſome notable monument of Gods extraordinary and miraculous power, either the bared arme and hand, or ſome finger of God, is not diſcovered. In ſome one Chapter perhaps, ſome two or three wonders offer themſelves to our view, one upon another, of remarkeable note. Witneſſe thoſe unheard of, and unparalled examples of the deluge, confuſion of languages, framing of the Arke, the birth and ſacrificing of *Iſaak*, the victory of *Iacob* wreſtling with God, the preſervation of the Church in the famine, the ten plagues of Egypt, the wonderfull paſſage through the red ſea and wilderneſſe to the holy land, the victories of *Ioſhua* even by Rams horns and potſherds, *Gedeons* fleece, the conqueſt of Sifera, the Suns ſtanding ſtill, and returning ten degrees, *Ionahs* reſcue from the Whale, and the Prophet *Daniel* from the Lions. And, for the new Teſtament, what is it, ſave a continued tenor of divine and miraculous operations of the Lord Jeſus and his Apoſtles? So that we may perceive the holy Ghoſt to reigne in this kinde, and to take a kinde of felicity, to get out from naked and common diſcourſe, to ſome rare and wonderfull expreſſion of the workes of God, his Revelations, viſions, and ſtrange acts in and for his Church. And ſurely, if we ſhall enquire into the reaſon hereof; we ſhall finde, that the Lord hath in wiſdome choſen this courſe, as well knowing the mould and frame of them he had then, and hath now to deale withall: I meane both thoſe Jewes, and us Gentiles, all the ſonnes of *Adam* and the fleſh. That is with cloddy, carnall, dead and ſenſuall creatures, ſtiffnecked and rebellious ones; wits and affections ſavouring nothing but the creature, or at leaſt promiſes of meer temporall kinde, but as for matters of divinity and ſpirituall nature, utterly ſavourleſſe. Contraries are cured by contraries: and if there be any thing able to raiſe and elevate muddy and loggiſh ſpirits from the dunghill, and from creeping heer below: it muſt be a divine ſtreame of ſtrange and unheard of accidents, adminiſtrations, and atcheivements, whereby the baſe heart of man (as the Angel in the ſmoke of the ſacrifice) may riſe

The Scriptures full of rarities and wonders.

Gen. 7.
Gen. 11.
Gen. 22.
Gen. 32.
Gen. 42.
Exod. 6. 7. 8. &c.
Exod. 13
Ioſh. 7. 8.
Iudg. 8.

The cauſe why?

1 Our lumpiſh earthy mould.

riſe up to heavenly and holy thoughts and affections. Hereby the dull and blunt ſences the dead hearts of ſinfull men are whetted up, (farre more then by raviſhing muſique) to Gods matters, and are taken off from the earth. 2 Kings

Moreover, the Lord hath bin faine to take the advantage of our baſe frame, (which is much amuſed and aſtoniſht at the ſight and hearſay of uncouth and ſtrange matters:) to drive in thereby holy things, which elſe would be but flat notions, vaniſhing and comming to nothing: the tree which hath long lien ſodding in the ditch, if it be once unſettled, may be carried home. Much harder is it to ſtir the ſence and quicken the affection, lying dead and in cool bloud, then to work a further and ſuperior impreſſion in it, being once raiſed. The ſpirit of a man, though it be corrupt and dead, yet being immortall, cannot ſo far forget it ſelfe (if once God quicken it) as to lay aſide her nature altogether. Therefore the Lord mainly aimes at ſtirring of it up from her dead frame. No other reaſon can be given why *Iohn Baptiſt* came with ſuch a hideous outſide of apparrel, camels haire, courſe diet, and alſo with the extraordinary ſpirit of *Elia*: ſave that the people being taken at firſt by his guiſe and habit, might be wrought upon the more eaſily by his Miniſtry, preparing and levelling their rough and high ſpirits for their Lord Jeſus. And what other uſe had all thoſe miracles wherewith the doctrine of Chriſt, and all the preaching of the Apoſtles were accompanied: ſave this, that by and with them as by Tunnels, the influence, power and authority of truth might enter and prevaile with the mindes and conſciences of the hearers ere they were aware? That, they being amazed and convinced by the greatneſſe of thoſe ſignes and effects which attended and followed the word, might have no power nor ſpirit left in them to contradict him that ſpake thereby: but yeeld and beleeve the truth for the workes ſake. The miracles themſelves, the healing of a leper, the reſtoring of the lame, the raiſing up of the dead, the healing of the ſicke; the doing of the workes, and benefiting of the perſons, was not the iſſue and intent of the worker: but that the glory of that God, the grace of that ſpirit which wrought ſuch wonders might ſoke and ſinke into the ſoules of men, before and upon, whoſe eies and perſons thoſe miracles were diſcovered: That by this meane, converſion from Idols, and ſinfull courſes, unto the living God might be effected, through faith in the promiſe. Witneſſe that ſtory of the woman of Samaria in the fourth of S. *Iohn*: To whom the Lord Jeſus did ſo expreſſe himſelfe, as to declare all the ſecrets of her heart, to convince her of all the villanies that ever ſhe had committed in all her ſeven husbands time: and why? Surely that ſhe having her loade of heart within her, might go into the City, & tell it her kindred and acquaintance, draw them to Chriſt himſelfe, as being aſtoniſht at his excellency; and being once within his compaſſe, might be eaſily pulled by his doctrine, to a further pitch of grace, and ſay, Now we beleeve not becauſe of the wordes which thou haſt ſpoken: but becauſe we have heard him ſpeake himſelfe.

2
By ſenſible things God takes us at advantage.

Luke 3.

This ſhould teach us a wide difference between Gods word and the writings, and ſtories of Heathens; who to get themſelves a name among men, and to ſute the eloquence of their ſtile, either Greeke or Latine Poets

Vſe of inſtruct.

2 Kings

ets and Hiſtorians, have ſtuffed their writings with abundance of rarities and wonders, for the procuring admiration of men, and appetite of Readers, curious of Novelties: But alas! their relations being juſtly ſuſpitious, and for the moſt part fabulous and vaine, ſavoring of mans baſe ſpirit, and lying invention, doe as much diſhonour their fidelity, as they magnifie their language and skill in contriving; they doe but Ape the Scriptures, and ſteale away the minds of Students; who, although they may lawfully further themſelves by the tongue and phraſe, yet ought to take heed how they bee taken too farre with them, as ſome profane wits have beene, who have not ſtuck to ſcorne ſome writers of Scripture, in compariſon of this or that Heathen writers. No, give all their due, but reſerve that preeminence of worth to the Scriptures, which they deſerve; being as much beyond the moſt exact writer of Story for their Antiquity, purity, Majeſty, and authority, as the Sunne is above the pooreſt ſtarre in the firmament.

Branch 1. Heathen ſtories unlike the Scripture.

2. Branch.

And ſecondly, this obſervation might leave much inſtruction with us, if we were willing to embrace it. And firſt it might ſet a glaſſe before our eyes to behold in our nature, that wofull inſenſibleneſſe and unperceiving of holy things. The carnall man (ſaith Saint *Paul*) conceiveth not the things of God, neither yet can do: they are ſpiritually diſcerned by the power of another principle. I ſay not that this courſe of miracles, or wonderfull effects is able to overcome this ſtupor of our underſtanding: no, there muſt be a further progreſſe of the ſpirit of grace to effect that: yet this externall and remote preparative may be enough to convince us what a ſpirit of old *Adam* dwels in us, and what a curſe lyes upon our nature, for the reſiſting of that light of truth which was put into us in our creation. And that is the loſſe not only of actuall light, but even of diſpoſition to apprehend the truths which are offred us, for the cure of our diſeaſe. Our faculty to underſtand is ſtill left in us, ſo that we are not meere blockes and beetles: But in matters of God, ſo originally are we blunted and dulled in our ſpirits and ſences, ſo diſabled, and ſo diſguized, ſo deeply alſo implunged into a life of ſence and ſottiſh ſenſuality, that the myſteries of God are quite above us. As the nature of ſenſible creatures in kind, exceeds the vegetable, and the reaſonable goes beyond them, ſo that each of them wants a faculty to reach the others object: ſo doth the myſtery of God, of Chriſt, of grace, exceed the underſtanding of a meere reaſonable creature. I ſhall meete with a better ground of opening this point after: here only let this ſuffice to abaſe us, and hold us downe before God, as degenerate and miſerable creatures in reſpect of this our incapableneſſe of holy things. We can cry out of the Jewes, whom the Scriptures were written unto, for that they were ſo dull and ſlow of heart to conceive the matters of God, his workes and wayes, when as yet they were beaten into every ſence as it were with hammers of extraordinary and divine Prophecies, Viſions, miracles, and waies of revealing. Oh! ſay men; doubtleſſe had we ſeene the ſtanding up of the ſea on both ſides, dry in the midſt, the returne of the waters upon the Egyptians, the guſhing forth of water from a Rock, and the bringing in of ſuch a number of quailes: how would we have acknowledged the power and Majeſty of God? Had we ſeene the Law given by Angels with ter-

Rom. 8. 6. 7.

Jewes ſtrangely inſenſible of Gods miracles.

rors

rors and fire : had we beheld with our eyes the perſon of *Iohn* (a miracle without miracles) and the wonders which Chriſt and the Apoſtles added to their Sermons : how would we have beene raviſhed with them and beleeved ? I anſwer : ſo ſhould they have done indeed, and you if you had beene in their places : But alas ! as they did, ſo ſhould you have done, without more grace, and that appeares by this, that now being under far greater convictions, and a way of God as far exceeding the power of thoſe outward ſignes, as heaven exceeds earth, yet you are as farre from conceiving and beleeving as they.

Vſe 2. Humiliation.

Thirdly, it ſhould ſcare and terrifie all of us, who now injoy the body of Scripture compleate, together with all the helpes of thoſe divine ordinances which are beſtowed upon the Church of Chriſt, both publicke and private ; for that (notwithſtanding all theſe) the moſt people ſtill remaine unperſwaded, or halfe perſwaded of the truth. Saint *Paul* to the Hebrewes, Cap. 2. tells us, if they who deſpiſed *Moſes* Law, upon two or three witneſſes were condemned : what ſhall become of them who deſpiſe ſo great ſalvation ? who ſtill diſtruſt that truth of God which was firſt ſpoken by the Lord of heaven and earth, comming in the fleſh, afterward confirmed by ſuch as heard him, by miracles and the power of the word in thoſe who were converted : So may I ſay here ; this very text of *Naaman* ſhall ſtand up and convince all that maintaine ſelfe and ſelfe-love, carnall and corrupt reaſon againſt the truth and power of the promiſe ; yea, this miracle whereby the word was ſtrengthned, with all thoſe miracles by which any truth of Chriſt hath ſince been juſtified, ſhall riſe up and convince all unbeleevers, I meane ſuch as live under meanes in that day. For why ? Though they ſaw none of theſe miracles, yet hearing the word, beholding the ſeales, receiving them into all our ſences, I ſay ſuch a word as hath beene ratified by all the wonders of the Old and New Teſtament ſerving to beare down a baſe heart of unbeliefe, about the truth, power, love, al-ſufficiency of God : if they beleeve not by all theſe ; they ſhall be condemned juſtly by that authority which they have deſpiſed, yea the very frame of the Scriptures, and the expreſſions of ſo many ſtrange and admirable paſſages, ſerving to raiſe up a baſe and crawling ſpirit to heaven : if we ſhall be found unbeleevers in that great day of Chriſt : ſhall be brought forth as a witneſſe againſt us, for our horrible inſenſibleneſſe and ſtupor of minde and heart. For by theſe the Lord hath (as it were) ſtriven to engraven in our ſpirits, as with the pen of a Diamond, the truthes of God, and myſtery of Chriſt. If then our ſoules ſhall be found ſo hard and flinty, that this point hath not pierced them : if wee be ſtill unconvinced, and this inſtrument of gold hath no more left impreſſion upon us, then if a ſtraw or rotten ſticke had beene uſed to write in our tables of ſtone, oh how fearefull ſhall our condemnation be !

Hebr. 2. 2. 3. 4.

Miracles ſerve to convince the ſoule of the truth ſealed thereby.

Unbeleefe of Scripture and Truth of God after ſo many miracles, very damnable.

Queſt. Miracles how far ceaſed, hard to ſay.

If any man ſhall ſtep in here, and demand, hath God ſo ſufficiently confirmed his truth by miracles, that there ſhall neede no more ? I anſwer, I know its the opinion of many, that they are wholly ceaſed, and that becauſe the uſe of them is ceaſed. For that ſpirit which attends the Miniſtry of the word, carries a conviction of the truth into the mind, according to all that is in the truth. Now if it be ſo, then that ſpirit per-

Anſw.

2 Kings

ſwades the ſoule of all the truth, aſwell in reſpect of the confirmation of it, by miracles as otherwiſe; but as I ſtagger much about this opinion, ſo yet I am loth to affirme, that the Church hath any warrant under faith to looke for the gift of miracles, to be aſſuredly vouchſafed her, although the ends thereof may ſeeme very weighty. Who can, or dare deny, but that the calling of thoſe Americans, to the knowledge of the truth, may ſeeme a weighty occaſion to expect from God the gift of miracles? partly by reaſon of their language, almoſt impoſſible to be attained, except by either a miraculous, or at leaſt a marveilous gift? partly, becauſe there be poore inducements to draw ſuch imperſwaſible and brutiſh ſpirits, to caſt ſo much as their eyes upon any meanes to induce them to beleeve? In both which reſpects, I dare not deny, but that as Satan by lying wonders prevailes much with ſuch as periſh, ſo the Lord may vouchſafe this ſpirit of miracles to his Church, when his time is come, to effect the converſion of ſuch. Only I adde, that when his time is come, he will grant his Church an inſtinct of ſpirit, to aske it, and joyne ſeriouſly in the meanes to attaine it; which elſe he will not incline them unto, his time not being come. For wee muſt weigh the ends of our travell into remote parts: whither for our owne ends, or for publique. If our owne reſpects be chiefe, we have no cauſe to looke for miracles. But I chuſe rather to leave the thing in Gods diſpoſe.

Vſe 4. Exhortation.

Spirit of acknowledgement of God in his word is to be ſought by prayer.

Branch 1. generall.

Laſtly, let it exhort us both generally and ſpecially, firſt, to ſue earneſtly to the Lord Jeſus our Prophet, the Word of the Father, and the firſt inditer of all Scripture, the contriver of all the paſſages thereof, the worker of all wonders, and the Author of all grace and wiſedome, that he would vouchſafe us the ſpirit of revelation and acknowledgement of him (as Saint *Paul* ſpeakes, Epheſ. 1.18.) That we being enlightned in our mindes, may conceive aright of the true ſcope and intent of the Spirit in the Scriptures: and that he would intimate our hearts with the purpoſe thereof; which is, that our ſoules might be captivated under the power and authority of the ſpeaker: That we reſt not in the outſide of miracles, wonders, parables, ſimilitudes which we heare, or read, but conſidering their aime, be carried downe the ſtreame of the thing ſpoken, yea the power, ſoveraignty, and faithfulneſſe of the ſpeaker: Not only thereby conceiving more cleerely in our mindes of the Lord, his Attributes and the truths revealed, but much more raviſhed in our affections towards him for the good things whereof we have taſted. Many chuſe patheticall texts, hiſtories and accidents, actions and ſpeeches of ſpeciall note, to read and pleaſe themſelves in; ſome delight to read of the building of the Temple, others of the paſſion of Chriſt, others other parcells of Scripture to provoke admiration and diſcourſe, even as they might read any other booke of tales and wonders: ſome alſo read texts of devotion and holineſſe, as the Pſalmes, or wiſe ſentences, as the Proverbs with a morrall ſpirit and ſcope only, but never muſe of the ſeverall ends of ſuch places nor the ſpirit of grace therein, ſave onely to amuſe their mindes, and ſtirre up pangs of affection: But by theſe, to come neerer to know their owne baſe hearts, or to cloſe with the examples of ſuch grace, to feare the judgements of God the more deepely, to beleeve the promiſes better, to ſubject themſelves more to the commands of God

To reſt in the barke of the word or of miracles, Parables, Similitudes, is dangerous.

and

and in all to ſee his foote-ſteps and to adore the ſpeaker, few attaine it. Therefore let us read theſe texts with prayer to God for ſence and ſavor of their meaning and ſcope: that we may attaine the ſpiritualneſſe of them: Elſe we ſhall anſwer heavily to God for making the ſolemne and reverend truths of God, an occaſion to nouriſh and maintaine that corrupt diſpoſition, novelty, carnall admiration, jangling and unprofitableneſſe, which the Scripture eſpecially ſerves to mortifie in us. 2 Kings

An inſtance of the exhort.

To give a taſte of my meaning in an inſtance: let that be the miracle recorded 2 King. 7. to wit, the Prophet *Eliſha* his cauſing of the Iron to ſwimme, when it was fallen into the water; he that reads it as a bare miracle will onely vaniſh in a wondering humor: but he that reads it with faith, and reverence, will behold the power of God, over-ruling the creatures quality, and cauſing the waighty body of iron to float like a chip, contrary to the nature of it. And what will ſuch a meditation picke out of it? Surely a ſweet conſolation in the power of God; *viz.* to overrule a worſe nature in a worſe ſubject: even the dulneſſe and lumpiſhneſſe of an heavy heart in matters of God, and cauſe it to mount up from this baſe dunghill, whereunto tis fixed, unto heaven and holy thoughts: yea, to change this hard heart, more hard then a flint, or iron, and make it a ſoft and fleſhy heart, to write his covenant in it, and cauſe it to walke in his Commandements; where from tis as farre as iron from ſwimming. If then the caſting in of a ſticke could worke ſuch an effect: if the bare power of God (onely for a witneſſe that the worke then intended was from God) without any reſpect to the iron it ſelfe, could doe this great thing: what ſhall be the power of God working in and by the bloodſhed and interceſſion of the Lord Jeſus upon an heart of heavier frame and harder, which thereby ſhall be much the better in it ſelfe, beſides the infinite honour which the worker of this miraculous change ſhall purchaſe to himſelfe by it? although to carnall reaſon it may ſeeme impoſſible?

2. Branch, particular.

And in particular, let this exhort us all to be more ſtudious and zealous obſervers of this text in hand. Our Saviour could ſet a ſpeciall marke upon it, as containing peculiar inſtruction for us to caſt down thoſe ſtrong forts and high thoughts in us, which doe deſtroy the ſimplicity of ſelfe-deniall, faith, and the obedience of Chriſt. Surely if ſtrange things will affect us, as who now adaies affect not (Athenian wiſe) new and ſtrange reports and accidents, to heare and to tell them (though emptily and as paſſages for preſent talke) this text hath cauſe, and may plead to be ſpecially marked above many. Which containes the cure of the onely leper to whom (above all them in Iſrael) *Eliſha* was ſent *Naaman* a ſtranger and Heathen Aramite; ſutable whereto are all the circumſtances making toward it: The very roote and firſt occaſion of it was ſtrange, by a poore damoſell and captive (yet one that had taken notice of *Eliſha* to very good purpoſe.) The diſeaſe ſtrange, an incurable leproſie; the cure ſtrange, by the applying of common water to his fleſh (to reaſon incredible.) The courſe by *Naaman* ſtrange in miſtaking an Idolatrous King for his Phyſitian, in ſteed of an holy Prophet: the redreſſe of the error ſtrange, by an intimation from God, to fetch him the right way to the Prophet: his carriage ſtrange, in humble ſliding before a poore Prophets doore, and (to come neerer the text) the meſſage uncouth and ſtrange, for

Naamans ſtory, and the paſſages thereof, very remarkable.

Particulars of it ſummed up.

2 Kings

for a Prophet not to vouchsafe to come to the doore to a petitioning Prince, but to send an aloofe message: *Naamans* enterteining it strange, and promising but a sinister successe, (for what likelyhood is it that a patient raging at his Physitian should be cured?) The perswasion strange even by servants, (not likely either to perswade aright, or to prevaile by perswading) But above all the effect of this counsell, strange, that he should obey his servants, who cavelled against the Prophet: the successe of his obeying strange, to recover his flesh as the flesh of a child: And to conclude, the consequents of the successe strange, both his spirituall cure of Soule-leprosie, the extraordinary zeale and resolution to renounce Idols for the true God: and the most sincere detestation of that most predominant and beloved lust, which before had prevailed, to wit, to worship Rimmon himself, & be his Masters leaning stock in that worship. So many strange concurrences, might (I say) justly force our attention to this story: and yet the chiefe thing contained in it, is no stranger thing, then that which we daily carry about us, I mean self and carnall reason: But so intricated and wrapped about us, so deeply seated and hidden in our spirits, that (without the great goodnesse of God) we shall behold it, read it over and over, wonder at it in *Naaman*, but see none of it in our selves, and so leave the perusall of this Treatise with as small fruit as we began it. Which penalty the Lord keep from us! and so meet with us and match us, in our reading hereof, by the inspiration of his spirit, that this story may be a looking glasse in which this great blur of selfe may so be discerned, that the promise and word of God may present a better image unto our soules, and transforme us into it from glory to glory: that he that boasteth may not boast in himselfe, but in the Lord.

A second generall of the whole text. The person of *Naaman* the Subject of it.

A second generall, as equally concerning the whole text and mixed through it, as the former, is, the subject of this whole text the person of chiefe note, *Naaman* the leper. The words used by our Saviour, do occasion me to touch upon this point, & its of no small importance. To wit, that the Lord passing by all other lepers in Israel, neerer hand, and liker to make use of the Prophets helpe, then one a far off, (who onely by a report of a silly wench at second hand, had intelligence of him) should out of his meer grace send him to this *Naaman* and *Naaman* to him, (which phrase imports a sending of spirituall efficacy to conversion) and, make him a marke of greater mercy then his owne people, yea an upbraiding to them, in all succeeding generations. Many lepers (saith Christ) there were in the daies of *Elisha*, but to none of them all, was he sent, save only to *Naaman* the Syrian. Whether no other lepers at all were healed by *Elisha*, its heard to say: and me thinkes as hard to imagine, that all lepers should so scape his hands. Perhaps they did not: and partly the Damosells report evinces it, for how else should she so readily point at *Elisha* for the cure of *Naamans* disease, if she had never heard of his healing others in that kinde? Howbeit I affirme nothing: she might speake from a generall honour she bare to the Prophets worth: but this is sure: although some lepers might come to *Elisha*; yet he was sent to none save to *Naaman*: that is, the Lord used him not to the spirituall good and salvation of any other save him. I hope, I shall not need to prove the truth of his conversion: If any doubt of it, let them note, but the scope of our Saviours

discourse

2 Kings

diſcourſe in that place of Saint *Luke*, and it will ſatisfie him: for, except it be granted that *Naaman* was converted, the whole ſcope of our Saviours ſpeech is overthrowne. And that evidently is this, to convince and upbraid his owne countrymen for their contempt and infidelity: and that by *Naamans* example. As if he ſhould ſay, Truſt not to this that you and I are Townſmen, and neer of acquaintance; God is no excepter of perſons, grace is free, and mercy is neither of the willer or runner, but of him who ſheweth mercy: look well to your ſelves, that ye deſpiſe not the offer I make, as little worth, and thinking your ſelves *Abrahams* ſeed, and children of the promiſe: for, (except ye beleeve) the Lord can paſſe by thoſe of the kingdome, and call in from the Eaſt and Weſt, ſtrangers, even ſuch as *Naaman*, and thruſt out the children. Marke then, except *Naaman* were converted, the Jewes might have had a ready evaſion to eſcape the dint of this exprobration, and have ſaid, Why Lord? *Eliſha* was no more ſent to *Naaman*, then thou art ſent to us, there was no more wrought in him, then in us. This had bin to cut the ſinewes of Chriſts argument aſunder. And whereas it may be alledged, Chriſt did no miracles at Nazareth: I anſwer, it is uncertaine: But ſay he did not, it had bin ſmall upbraiding of them, with the want of miracles, if he had not much more caſt them in teeth, with the want of that, for which miracles ſerved, I meane grace and faith. This objection then thus removed; I returne and ſay, that the Lord ſent *Eliſha* to *Naaman* for the cure of ſoule and body, out of an eſpeciall freedome of Graces, which he denied to others, who were far fairer for it then he: That the glory of this free and ſoveraigne mercy and compaſſion might only be aſcribed to God.

Luke 4.27.

Doct. Gods grace is free. Rom. 9.10.11.

The doctrine then hence, is, that Grace is free and ſoveraigne. And, unto this truth doth all the Scripture give witneſſe. The Apoſtle *Rom. 9.* defending the ſoveraignty of God, againſt all cavillers, who cannot endure that God ſhould differently impart himſelfe to ſuch as are equally inwrapped in the ſame ſtate of corruption, ſaith thus, ſhall the clay ſay to the Potter, why haſt thou formed me thus? And whereas the caviller alledges, that this ſhould infer a contradiction between the ſecret will of God touching the end of the creature, and the revealed, touching the duty of the creature, and ſaith, why doth he then yet complaine? q. d. He hath barred the creature from obeying and beleeving, by a ſecret denying of power unto it, to do either, and doth he ſtill exhort, warne, threaten, and chide? The Apoſtle anſwers, Oh man who art thou who jangleſt with God? Is God unrighteous in each act of his whereof thy wit cannot give reaſon? And in the ſame Chapter, Wherefore, it is not of the willer, or the runner, but of God who ſheweth mercy. Why ſhould all others ſave *Lydia*, and the Jailor be left, when *Paul* came among that people, and all the wiſe Phyloſophers at Athens be paſſed by, onely *Dionus*, and *Damaris* a poore only man and only woman, being excepted? Who called *Rahab* and rejected all Jerico? *Ruth* and not *Orpah*? Who choſe *David* and refuſed *Eliab*? Who ſeparated the Gentile and rejected the Jew? Who is he that ſaith, not many wiſe, learned are choſen, but the meane things and fooliſh of this world to condemne the mighty? Why was that one Eunuch attended and converted by *Philip*, other Proſelites being let alone? Surely that we might tremble, and ſay, Oh the depth

Verſe 20.

Verſe 16.

Acts 16.14.& 27.

And Acts 17. ult.

1 Cor. 1.26.

2 Kings

depth of the wisdome, of the justice and mercy of God? how are his waies past finding out! why should one who came at the eleventh houre fare as well as he at the sixt? Because God may doe as he list with his owne. Is thine evill, because he is good? No, for of him, in him, and by him are all things: to him be praise for ever.

Matth. 20.12.

Calling to grace double. Unconditionall or conditionall, both free.

What the former is.

How it is free?

Now that Gods call is free, according to his owne soveraigne pleasure: appeares by the difference of Calling, which is two fold, the one unconditionall, the other conditionall. The former of these is that externall call of God whereby he ministers the meanes of the Gospel, by which the effectuall call may be attained. Now it is evident that this is free, for it requires not, nor cannot require any antecedent disposition or fitnesse in the called: All are equally sunke into rebellion in respect of their nature: and as concerning the practice, sure it is that howsoever the morals of some may possibly be worse then others: yet this can be no bar unto Gods free visiting them with light, if he please so to do: and there is no wickednesse of man, over which the grace of the Gospel may not prevaile. Say not (saith *Moses*) that the Lord hath chosen thee from among all other Nations, because thou wert better then they: for thou wert the worst of all Nations: But it was free mercy which thus chose and called thee to the Covenant, and to be a people: That caused the Lord to call thee from all other Nations of the world though all the world were his: Againe, it is not the moralnes of any people, nor their vertuous qualities, which can move the Lord to shew them the light of further grace: but if he leave them in their moralities, it is just and righteous. Sure it is, this unconditionall call is as free as the raine which falls upon the earth, in some places plentifully, in some scantly, in some not at all. Even where the Lord in soveraigne wisdome shall please to send it. Some places the Lord permitted his Apostles to goe to: others the Spirit forbad them to visit. God had no people there, therefore the meanes were held from them. Not, because the meanes were not granted: he had no people; but because he had no people, therefore meanes were not granted. Now concerning this former call, how many Nations of the world are excluded? Untill Christ all the world was excommunicate: (for the times of that ignorance God regarded not) and since Christ, (now full one thousand six hundred years and odde) how many are uncalled? if some speake truly, scarce a sixth or seventh part is yet visited: if it were but the one halfe, it were enough to prove this freedome. Cavills there are some against this former freedome, (the most of which are taken from the respects of more sinfullnesse in those people or their Predecessors, or some former contempt:) but they are so idle and senslesse, that the divisers of them, shew rather their desire to oppose, then any sound reason.

Deut. 9 4.

The latter is conditionall. How free?

The second Call is conditionall. And that concernes such as are inlightned; and that is also soveraignly free, and meerely gracious. For why? this condition is Faith: which is a second free gift to the elect, following the former freedome of visiting with light. Now this condition is not all mens lot, All men have not faith. 2 Thess. 3. 2. nay it is a flower growing in few gardens. This floweth from Election: So *many as the Lord our God shall call*, Acts 2.39. and so many as were to be saved beleeved.

beleeved. This condition of faith is not in our freedome of will, but the Lords: Its he, who of his good pleaſure workes both the will and the deed: and without his ſpirits breath (which bloweth where it will) nothing is done. Now this condition of the Goſpell, Faith I meane, being ſo few mens portion, how can it otherwiſe be, but, where it is, its free grace? But here its objected: That this were to tranſlate a crime upon God needleſly, which may lye upon man. I anſwer. No; ſtill the crime lyes upon man, God is free. If the Lord having man (now ſunke from his former integrity) at a deepe, yea infinite advantage (which in *Adam* he had him not at) ſhall worke out greater glory to his name and attributes, then formerly he could have done, ſhall any man grudge him this prerogative, or count him cruell, or tye him to his owne tether? Is it not free for him to doe what he pleaſes with his owne? Is it not in his power to releaſe or not to releaſe his owne advantage? Againe, wheras the cauſe of this difference is caſt upon mans owne default, for not receiving that grace, which he hath freedome to receive or refuſe. I anſwer. True it is; that condemnation ſhall never want a juſt merit thereof, *viz.* from mans rejecting of grace: but this proves not a freedome in man to accept it of himſelfe, if he pleaſe: for he rejects not grace by the actuall defect of any thing which he had power or free-will in himſelfe to doe (ſeeing that is meerely from the ſoveraignty of the caller) but from his actuall contempt. And whereas ſome alledge God will not be wanting to any, who are not wanting to themſelves: I anſwer. Firſt, if this have any truth in it, it is not from hence that ought, in mans concurring with grace, can further the worke of it: But becauſe, firſt, it is ſure, that thoſe who walke not in Gods way, are ſeldome converted: and ſecondly, becauſe (uſually) the Lord is mercifull to ſuch as doe humbly ſubject themſelves to his way: not oppoſing and ſlighting him in it, purpoſely: and thirdly, becauſe we ought not to diſcourage any from cloſe attendance upon the meanes: But to affirme, that God is, in the leaſt manner, obliged to doe for all ſuch as are not wanting to themſelves (if yet any can be ſaid to be ſo) its unwarranted: yea, and more then ſo, The Lord (to ſhew his abſoluteneſſe herein) doth oft times communicate himſelfe to ſuch as ſeeke him not, *Eſay* 65.1. and hide himſelfe from ſuch as ſeeke him (in ſome ſort) and forſakes the morall, the phariſaicall, the vertuous; and cals the vicious, the publicans and ſinners: That where ſin abounded, grace might abound much more: Many ungodly ones being convinced of their owne wofull incompliableneſſe to the grace of God offred, are called, that they might magnifie the freedome of it: and many more civill and morally diſpoſed, who might ſeeme faire for it; (yet are prone to joyne themſelves purchaſers with God, in this great worke) are defeated, that he who will boaſt, might boaſt of the Lord: and all might ſtand as guilty and abominable before God.

But here ſome will object, True it is, All being fallen from the grace of Creation, ſtand at Gods curteſie, for he may condemne them, and none can ſay, What doſt thou? And againe, whomſoever God ſaves, they confeſſe, that he ſaves them of his free and meere grace: But yet they adde, This grace is an univerſall one, anſwering to the univerſality of corruption: and therefore by vertue hereof, all may (if they will, and doe not

put

2 Theſſ. 3.2. Act. 2.39 & 47. Phil 2.13. John 3.8.

Object.

Anſw.

Matth. 20.13. 14.

Object.

Anſw.

Object:

Anſw:

Rom. 5.20.

1 Cor. 1.30.

Object.

2 Kings

put a barre to themſelves) receive this grace, but if they doe not, the cauſe (ſay they) is not from any defect in the ſufficiency of grace, or from any ſoveraignty in Gods diſpenſing it to ſome, more then others: for (ſay they) as he ought it to none at all; ſo, when he offers it freely, he offers it to ſome one with the ſame freedome and efficacy, with which he offers it to any one: and the difference of the accepting by one, and the not accepting by another, flowes from the different diſpoſitions, and free-will of him that nilleth or willeth: but not (ſay they) from any diverſity of diſpoſition in God. Beſides, the reaſon why they affirme grace muſt be univerſall, is this, becauſe elſe (ſay they) God ſhould deale hardly with the creature, to urge it to ſuch a condition of grace as he doth not allow him ſufficient ſtrength to performe, and yet puniſh him for the not performing thereof more deeply, then if ſuch grace had never bin offred: yea, to urge it to performe ſuch a condition as he never was able in his beſt integrity to performe. I anſwer. God doth not exact any ſuch condition at mans hand, as he gave him not ſufficient ſtrength to performe. For, man had at the firſt, ſtrength enough to performe, not onely whatſoever God did then require: But alſo whatſoever he might require, which included a power to obey univerſally. And therefore man having loſt that power by his fall, ſtands juſtly guilty before God of his impotency to beleeve the promiſe. But they ſtill urge, *Adam* could not poſſibly have the power to beleeve, in his innocency, ſince that preſuppoſes a thing which *Adam* then was not guilty of, *viz.* Diſobedience. I anſwer. *Adam* could not beleeve the pardon of that whereof he was not guilty: But *Adam* could and did beleeve in generall, by an holy truſt, or confidence, upon Gods ſupporting him during his obeying: which truſt though it had another object (in ſpeciall) then our faith hath, yet (in generall) hath the ſame. That looked at the alſufficient goodneſſe of Creation; this of Redemption; yet both behold God as the ſame object ſtill of infinite good, (in ſeverall regards) and fidelity to his creature.

Anſw.

Inſtan.

Anſw. 1.

Secondly I anſwer: That is falſe, and inconſequent, to affirme, that becauſe God condemned all mankinde for the loſſe of that grace of creation, which he gave in *Adam*, to the whole nature of man: Therefore he muſt needs beſtow an univerſall grace of redemption, in Chriſt upon the ſame mankinde, before he can juſtly puniſh them for refuſing it: I ſay, this followes not: except it be firſt proved; that the grace of redemption and the grace of creation, be ſutable things holding alike, in nature. But that, they are not: For, in the creation, the Lord could not but impart himſelfe to the creature, according to that bounty and goodneſſe of his excellent nature without any difference. But in the grace of redemption, it was farre otherwiſe: For firſt, he had all mankinde at an infinite advantage by their fall: and might communicate himſelfe ſo farre and no further then himſelfe pleaſed. Juſtice was now offended: and therefore, it was free for him to deſtroy all: and it was infinite mercy, to ſave any. Priſoners and guilty ones, uſe not to give law to their Judges, but take law from them. And ſecondly, although (if the Lord had thought good) he might have extended this grace full as farre, as the offence reached: yet all things conſidered, *viz.* That the Lord meant by occaſion of this fall, to manifeſt himſelfe to the creature in a further degree then he

Anſw. 2.

1. Branch of reaſon.

2. Branch.

he had done, and to glorifie himſelfe far more in his Attributes: therefore, to limit God to our conceit and proportion in this kinde, were to croſſe and contradict his wiſdome and ends, as leſſe wiſe then our owne. But it will be objected, If Chriſt the ſecond *Adam* were as truly in ſtead of the whole nature of mankinde to ſave, as *Adam* was to deſtroy: we ſhould infinitely wrong the extent of his ſatisfaction, if we made it more unable to ſave, then *Adams* ſinne was to condemne: foraſmuch as the Apoſtle ſaith, The gift is above the offence. Now then if the ſinne of mankinde were ſo imputed to Chriſt, as the ſinne of all mankinde to *Adam*, what ſhould hinder the univerſality of this grace? I anſwer: Chriſt was no ſuch large ſubject of imputation of all grace, as *Adam* was of ſin. And the Apoſtle even in the ſame place where he affirmes the gift to be above the offence, yet compareth [All] condemned in *Adam*, to [Many] ſaved by Chriſt. All and Many, differ much. So that we muſt know that the imputation of ſinne to Chriſt, was onely ſuch an imputation of ſinne as concerned the elect only: for if the ſinnes of more had bin imputed, ſurely more had bin ſaved then the elect. And ſo Chriſt ſhould have added to the number of the elect, and bin a Lord not a ſervant to election, (as a mediator:) nor a foundation of executing it, but a cauſe of morall ſwaſion to apprehend the truth, and embrace the good which is offered them, I demand, why doe not all pertake it, one as well as another? For if there be ſuch free will in them to receive it, what lets them from it? who would willingly balke heaven who might goe thither, or who would not ſhun hell, if his ſhunning deſire would ſerve the turne? Is there not a naturall ſelfelove in all to wiſh well unto themſelves; and to avoide the contrary, if that were ſufficient? If any ſhall ſay, the ſtrong luſts of ſome dazle their light, and oppreſſe the freedome of their will from accepting the offer, then I anſwer, how can that be called ſufficient grace which is faine to give place unto prevailing corruption? That is onely ſufficient which is effectuall to overcome and overſway the will, not which is compelled to yeeld and give place to the prevailing corruption of the will which it meets withall. What a diſhonour is that, to grace not to be able to effect her owne ends, but to be overcome by corruption? Grace doubtles, (if it be ſufficiently offered to all, that are enlightned) would ſufficiently caſt downe and ſubdue the ſtrongeſt holds, and higheſt thoughts of reſiſtance, ſet up in the ſoule againſt it; and ſo would ſave all without contradiction, as being an invincible principle, as much above the power of ſinne, as God is above the creature. Either therefore this univerſall grace doth convert all who receive it (which none is ſo abſurd as to affirme, being contrary to ſenſe and common experience) or elſe it muſt needs be denied to be ſufficient and powerfull to doe that which it intendeth. And therefore of neceſſity there muſt needs be another grace confeſſed, as neceſſary for the effecting of that which this univerſall grace cannot attaine unto, and that is that ſoveraigne and free grace of the ſpirit, which peculiarly workes in the elect; not an aid and concurring ſuccour to their free will, but that grace of willing freely, which they want wholly, and that ſtrength to ſubdue rebellion and unbeleefe which no enlightning grace (alone) can reach: I ſay it muſt be a peculiar grace of converſion, which worketh

Object.

Rom 5. 15.

Anſw.

Verſe 19.

Deut. 4.

2 Kings

both the will and the deed, and is ſo effectuall, that no ſtrength either of ſinne or the gates of hell can prevaile againſt it. Thus much I thought not unfit to ſay, for the explication of the point: enough a popular audidience for the ground of a ſermon: leaving deeper diſcourſe to Treaties for the nonce.

Vſe 1. Exhort. To confeſſe the Soveraignty of Gods Grace.

Now for uſe, let it be ſerious exhortation to all ſorts to concurre with moſt humble, lowly and equall hearts, with this abſolute ſoveraignty of Gods will and pleaſure in the diſpenſing of his owne grace, where when, and how farre himſelfe liſteth. Princes alway love to maintaine their owne unlimitedneſſe and Prerogatives above their ſubjects, and doe not like it that any ſubject ſhould make ſcrutiny into the ſecret of their ſoveraignty. How much more ſhould ſinfull duſt and aſhes beware of prying into and deſcanting upon the Prerogative of heaven? And becauſe this argument is a large field, I muſt diſtinguiſh it into ſeverall heads. Firſt, then, beware that wee nouriſh not a cavilling heart againſt God in this behalfe. *Gamaliel* adviſed his fellowes wiſely to beware leſt they went againſt the edge with God in the perſecuting of the Apoſtles, leaſt perhaps (ſaith he) ye be found fighters againſt God. As if he ſhould ſay, if ye ſhould pull God againſt ye, by oppoſing his Miniſters, ye ſhould make a good bargaine of it, and repent ye at leaſure. How much more then ſhould we beware of ſnagging and ſnarling at Gods ſecrets? which doe more immediately touch his Crowne and dignity then any thing, and trench upon his glory and Attributes, which are pretious, and which hee will not give to another? Learne we this, that ſecrets are for the Lord our God, let him alone with them: revealed things are for us. Such is the baſe pride of our forlorne ſpirits, that when wee have moſt deepely implunged our ſelves into the premunire of God, then we can leaſt of all beteame him the acknowledgement of our miſery, and leaſt ſtoop under his mighty hand: nay, then doe we feele a rebelling and recoyling ſpirit againſt God in fighting againſt his Soveraignty. Much like thoſe Jewes who when they were under the moſt deepe bondage of the Romans their enemies, yet had the proudeſt hearts to ſay, we are *Abrahams* children, and free men and never ſerved any. The cauſe whereof, is within our wofull boſomes, *viz.* that as we have loſt our firſt honor of Creation, ſo we have loſt both underſtandings to know, and wills to yeeld and bee convinced of it: being like drunken ſlaves, that dreame of liberty, and make themſelves merry with their owne woe: Even ſo doe we ſtruggle againſt the prerogative of God, and ſcorne that any difference at all ſhould be made between us and others.

Branch 1. Cavill not.

Act. 5.

Iſay 42.

John 8. 33.

Numb. 16.

Hence comes that fulſome conceit of the moſt, that all who profeſſe Chriſtianity are in an equall condition to God-ward: all the people of God are holy. They thinke that thoſe Miniſters who put difference betweene one and other (except open monſters and odious livers) take too much upon them, and out of ſingularity of ſpirit, and factious pride, doe but ſow the ſeed of diſſention betweene men and women, who elſe would live alike in neighbourhood and amity. And as for the worke of grace and converſion (which indeed puts the difference) either they conceit themſelves to be as forward in it, as the beſt, or if they be convicted of the contrary, that notwithſtanding the common profeſſion which they make with

with others, yet they come ſhort of them in the ſpirituall power and fruit of the Covenant and Word, of the Seales and Sacraments: oh they ſtorme and rage as a Beare robbed of her Whelpes! *Micah* did not make ſuch an out-cry after them who ſtole his gods, as theſe doe after them who would rob them of their Idoll of formall profeſſion. Which (in truth) argueth, that their hearts were never truly meekned nor ſubdued under this doctrine of ſoveraignty. But let all ſuch beware: for every blow which they give to God, lights upon their owne skin: and they carry a blacke marke about them of ſuch as muſt periſh, while they ſcorne to confeſſe the miſery which they are fallen into: and ſo to apply themſelves to the humble ſeeking of that peculiar mercy in God which muſt (if ever they be ſaved) bring them home to him. Sure it is, that the winding themſelves up in the common ſheet of other men, hoping they ſhall doe as well as they, and abhorring to thinke that others ſhould be better then themſelves: whiles yet, they let others goe before them in humiliation and faith: themſelves rejecting the meanes of grace: this pride and fulneſſe of ſelfeconceit will ſooner ſeale them up to hardneſſe of heart, and arme them with weapons of pride, and envy, rage and rebellion againſt Gods ſoveraignty; then bring them into the leaſt degree or ſtep towards ſalvation.

2 Kings

Judg. 18. 24

Secondly, let us be exhorted to lie under the conviction of this ſad truth, that God is the Soveraigne Lord of his owne grace, to do with his owne what him liſteth. The neglect of this duty, is the meane to foſter in the heart of man a roote of bitterneſſe and rancor againſt God, and ſo of enimity, treachery & jealouſie, the high way to hell. And therefore, reſt not, till thy ſoule can fully accommodate her judgement to confeſſe this truth, that grace is free, and without all reſpect of perſons. To this end, firſt conſider the root of this ſoveraignty, I meane that infinite advantage which thou haſt given the Lord, by thy wilfull fall in *Adam*. The little weighing whereof hath cauſed as many errors, and miſtakes in Religion and Divinity, as any one. Confeſſe it to be righteous with God, to take the uttermoſt advantage againſt thee, which the moſt ſtrict juſtice of his can deviſe. Admit no carnall corrupt colours of reaſon, or cavillers, againſt this truth: but lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and ſay, Thou haſt ſhut up all under diſobedience, Oh Lord, moſt juſtly, that thou mightſt by their ſinne, ſet forth the largeneſſe of thy Power, juſtice, and mercy! yea, although thou canſt not ſometimes unty the knots of carnall objections comming from thy rebellious heart, yet looſe thy ſelfe in this truth of God, and tremble at it ſaying, this is a depth too deepe for me to ſadom, and too high for me to reach: my reaſon is as the ſhort arme of a poore child, which cannot reach farre: But whether I reach it or not, I am ſure, there is an eternall truth in it, wherein I reſt. And this ſtep is a great degree towards mercy: and a marke of one whom the Lord will ſave: I meane to reſt convinced, and well apaid concerning this ſoveraigne pleaſure of God: A rebell, hypocrite, and enemy of God, dare not commit himſelfe to this ſea: he chuſeth rather to creep by the ſhore of his owne carnall reaſon, though it be to his owne perdition. It was the ſpeech of an Heathen man, concerning a profound oration, which he had heard a Philoſopher make, what I underſtood (ſaid he) I admired

2. Branch. Lie under the conviction of Soveraignty.

1. partic. Conſider the root of Soveraignty.

2 Kings

as excellent: and I beleeve alſo, that was excellent which I underſtood not: How much more ſhouldeſt thou bear in thy judgement, ſuch a reverend conviction of Gods matters, though above thee? And ſecondly, let us reſt well contented in the Lords free diſpenſation of the ſeverall meaſures of his grace: If he pleaſe to be found of ſome that ſought him not Eſay 65. 1. to make a ſhorter worke of it, yea to intercept them ere they are aware, in the midſt of an evill courſe and to powre in mercy by large meaſures, battering, breaking and ſubduing them betimes, and (as it were) all at once; whereas he ſuffers others, to goe on by the yeare and the ſeven yeare, without working any great matter in them ſenſibly, but ſuffers them to welter in their fears, doubts, and complaints: let us not murmur, but acknowledge his Soveraignty. Of which more in the uſe following.

2. Inſtance. Be content that the Lord diſpence grace, in what meaſures he pleaſeth.

3 Judge not God in the effects of his unlimited Soveraignty, either in ſinnes. See alſo Rom. 9. 17.

Likewiſe, let us not judge God in the effects of this his unlimited will: I mean in the trialls, commands, penalties, which he exerciſes the wicked withall: for why? he created them holy; and accordingly may in equity, trie them with ſtrict charges, though exceeding their ſtrength to obey. For he looks upon them, according to that grace which they have loſt, not which they have. So I may ſay touching thoſe penalties which they incurred by their ſinne, they were juſt. Had they clave to their duty, but in the matter of it, they had bin highly rewarded: and therefore falling off in coole bloud from doing the outward act, which was in their power, in the midſt of ſo many encouragements, how juſt was their overthrow? Why did the Lord inflict ſo heavy a plague upon all the poſterity for *Adams* ſinne? Becauſe it was a bundell of all ſinne, in one: and if he had ſtood, he had enjoyed all happineſſe for himſelfe and his? If the Lord Jeſus did juſtly accurſe the ſervant, I mean the figtree, for not bearing figs at all ſeaſons, (which, if ſin had not letted, it might have done) ſhall not the maſter much more be accurſed, for making himſelfe barren being created fruitfull?

4 Or penalties of wicked.

5 Nor for leading into tentation. Act. ult.

So alſo, let us not accuſe God for ſuffering them to fall. Its ſaid *Hophni* and *Phinees* could not hearken to their father, becauſe God would ſlay them. And the Jewes could not heare the voice of the Lord, becauſe *Eſay* had foretold the contrary, *viz.* that God had hardned them. For why? God put no evill into any of them: But becauſe he ſaw what baſeneſſe and rebellion was in them already, he left them thereto, and would not overpower their hearts: for it was juſt for him thereby to be avenged upon them, for their wilfull contempt: and ſo make them as ſnares to others, to fall by. Thoſe ten tribes were juſtly ſnared by *Ieroboams* calves, becauſe they had plaid the Idolaters before in *Salomons* daies, under the freedome of the Temple worſhip: and ſo God would plague them for all at once, and both give them a King in wrath, and ſweep them away in diſpleaſure. A maſter having a ſlie ſervant, oft drunken and careleſſe of his buſineſſe, to the end he may pay him for all, doth juſtly ſend him to ſome place which accidentally occaſions him to fall: he ſends him upon an errand juſtly, but becauſe he means to prevent all his ſhifts, and puniſh him ſoundly, he will ſuffer him to fall into a ſnare, that he may take him in the manner, and puniſh him for all his prankes together. So, when God puniſhes the ſinnes of parents upon the children, *Ahabs* upon *Iehorams*, *Eli's* upon thoſe hundred and eighty Prieſts ſlaine by *Saul*, *Salomons* upon

upon *Rehoboam*. For why? The Lord beholding them, in the ſinnes of their parents imitated and unrepented of, deſtroies both ſerpent and egs together. Let us I ſay ſtrive to be convinced in our judgements, touching Gods moſt juſt Prerogative in all theſe, and all other kindes: and being ſettled in judgement we ſhall not eaſily ſtagger in our affection and practiſe.

2 Kings

Exod. 20. Nor for punishing the ſins of parents in their poſterity.

Thirdly, let us ſubmit ſo farre, under this Soveraignty of God, as to do to the uttermoſt of our power, to obey all his charges and commands, and to ſtoope to all his ordinances, which he propounds unto us for our converſion. Shall God have us at ſo great a bay as he hath, and ſhall we wax careleſſe? Or, becauſe we are not able to do that which he requires for the matter, ſhall we therefore, in a ſullen and deſperate humour, ſit ſtill and doe nothing? Shall we not ſhun any ſinne for conſcience, which we can ſhun, if hired with mony? Becauſe all is not, either in our willing or running, ſhall we neither will or run? Nay more, put caſe we have brought upon us by our ſin ſuch an avoidable languor & diſability, that we cannot put forth our ſelves to the uttermoſt, that common enlightning might worke us: to what? Shall we therefore doe nothing which lies in our power to do? yes ſurely in holy awe of this freedome of God to do with us, and our endeavours, what him liſts, let us tremble, and in all humility doe the beſt we can: yet truſting to none of it, loathing to be Phariſees and Pelagians, but abhorring much more to be Epicures and malecontents: walke we in Gods way, in which he only is found, and may be found of us: But thoſe that diſdain to heare, to pray, to take paines becauſe God hath the bridle in his owne hand, ſhew themſelves Giants rather, and ſuch as would be revenged upon God, then deſirous to get heaven, by ſubmitting to his power and Soveraignty. As thoſe lamps were fitly planted under the olive branches to receive the oile which dropped from them by the providence of God, ſo let us accommodate our ſelves under the dropping of the ordinances, aſcribing nothing to our ſelves, but all to the meer grace of the ordainer, as *Zachary* there ſpeakes, not by ſtrength or mans wiſdome, but by my ſpirit ſaith the Lord.

3. Branch. Do what lies in us to obey Gods will.

Zacha. 4 5.

Fourthly, let it teach us tenderneſſe and charity, towards meane ones, ignorant, yea looſe and diſſolute ones: let us not affect the diſdaining of the baſeſt, ſimpleſt, vileſt, (although we ought to loath their manners) but conſider thy ſelfe; if thou onely exceed them in morality, wit, and parts, tremble to think, that ſuch ſilly ones and ungodly may perhaps ariſe & pull heaven by violence to themſelves, and thou with all thine abilities be thruſt to hell! where were then thy boaſting? *Ipta* was thruſt out for a baſe excrement from the family of Gilead: Judg. 10. 4. But they were all glad to ſeeke him for their Captaine in their diſtreſſe: Poore *Ioſeph* the ſlave, was yet ſo preferred that the Sun, Moone, and ſtarres, were faine to do homage to him: deſpiſe not the leaſt: free grace may make him thy better, and make thee glad to ſeek to him for helpe and ſuccour ere thou die: and envy not the greateſt neither; for the Lord can ingraft thee alſo into the ſame ſtocke, as meane as thou art, if thou canſt adore his ſoveraigne mercy, which magnifies it ſelf, as much in the ſetting up of the low, as the mighty, that they who boaſt, might not boaſt of their perſon or quality, but of the Lord.

4 Branch. Be charitable to others.

2 Kings

5. Branch. Breake thy hard heart hereby.

Fifthly, let thy ſtony heart break in peeces between the hammer of his Soveraignty, and the pillow of his long ſuffering and patience toward thee. Surely in that he hath ſo long had thee at ſo infinite advantage, its ſtrange that ever he ſhould forbear thee ſo long, offer thee ſuch meanes & ordinances; or ſhould paſſe by the daies of thine ignorance, or ſuffer any ſeed or remainder of a tender heart to abide in thee. I ſay, it is ſtrange he ſhould reſtore thee out of ſo many perills, diſeaſes, and hazards: ſtil preſent thee with hope and poſſibility of forgetting ſuch a multitude of tranſgreſſions, and forgiving thy offences. What ſhould all this argue, ſave a moſt bountifull abatement of extremity & rigor, and that (notwithſtanding his power, yet) his love is more prevailing with him, to ſpare thee? Shall this kindneſſe of his, leading thee to repentance, be an occaſion to forget both his ſoveraignty, and thine owne guiltineſſe, and (according to thine hard heart which cannot repent) wax ſtout and wilfull againſt him, and ſo heap up wrath againſt the day of juſt vengeance? No, rather, this mixture of both, ſhould keep thee within bounds, and put holy thoughts of his purpoſe and pleaſure into thee: then breed a deſperate enmity on the one ſide, or ſecurity on the other, (to both which thy heart is far more propenſe) then to come in, give up thy weapons, and tremble at thy wretchedneſſe.

Rom. 2. 4.

6. Branch. Lay downe thy pride and rebellion.

Sixtly, let this doctrine, not onely convince thy judgement of a truth, that the caſe thus ſtandeth, between God, and thy ſoule, but let it proceed, to bring thine heart, and whole ſelfe, under the authority of this advantage, at which God hath thee. That is, let it worke exceeding humiliation, and feare of ſpirit in thee, and cauſe thee to pull downe thy peacocks fethers, and lay downe thy pride, rebellion and gainſaying heart, and be as one out of himſelfe. As that jailor, when the earthquake had broken the priſon doores, and looſed the priſoners; thought himſelfe but a dead man: and *Paul* being under the arreſt of Gods might and power, lay for dead. So, the thought of this thy wofull diſadvantage under the hand of God, ſhould cauſe the jollity of thy ſpirit to quaile, and thy bog and bold heart to be abaſhed, ſaying, if this be thus, whence, comes my impudent, reſolute purpoſe to go on in my courſe? I ſee, I have not mercy at my command, nor grace pind to my ſleeve, when I can but uſe three or foure good wordes at my death. Alas! I perceive I my ſelfe am infinitely under the advantage of Juſtice and wrath, both in *Adam*, and by my owne wicked courſes! Is this then (Oh my ſoule!) a ſeaſon of revelling, of caſting care away, of adding drunkenneſſe to thirſt? Is this a time to conteſt, to provoke, to increaſe ſinne by wilfulneſſe? What? do I think to ſcare God by my murmurings and cavills againſt him? Oh no! this is the way to make judgement inexcuſable! and hell ſeven times hotter then at firſt! Therefore lay it to heart as thoſe in Act. 2. did, when they heard *Peter* ſhew them what pickle they were in for murdering the Lord of life. Oh! their hearts were gored as with a ſwords point! So, let rottenneſſe enter into thy bones, tremble and ſay, What if the Lord ſhould take this advantage of his to deſtroy me? What if his long ſuffering all this while hath onely ſpared me as a veſſel of wrath, that he might with the fuller ſwinge, come upon me, and all at once ſweep me to hell? what a taking are thoſe men in who are at their enemies curteſie, as having

Act. 16. 27.

Act. 9.

See Eſay 28. 22.

having loſt allthey have, or condemned in as much as they are worth, and at the mercy of their adverſary, who hath got an execution againſt all their eſtate? ſurely hee were an odde man for ſtoutneſſe of ſtomacke who ſhould ſtand it out and dare his enemy to ceaze upon him. Alas! what a poore wretch ſhould he be made? So here, what reſcue hath the dry ſtubble againſt the advantage of fire, if once kindled in it? Oh! if thou canſt bring downe thy baſe and ſturdy heart by this meditation, how thou ſtandeſt at the meere curteſie of him, who cannot only deſtroy thy body, but caſt body and ſoule to hell: if this will maſter thy proud heart and make thee crouch and put thy face within thy knees for confuſion and ſorrow, thou haſt attained ſome part of that end which this convincement ſerves for.

2 Kings

Eſay 27.4.5.

Luke 12.4.5.

Seventhly, yet reſt not in this dejection onely. Conſider that the ſoveraignty of God doth not reach only to deſtroy the creature, but ſometimes to abaſe it, and ſave it. There is a ſoveraignty of mercy, a free and bountifull grace aſwell in that God, who hath thee at this advantage, as a power to condemne. And therefore apply thy ſelfe to the beholding of thoſe cords which the Goſpell puts in, and offers thee in this dungeon, and of that ladder which is thruſt in for thee to come up by, as to the meer implodding and ſadding thy thoughts with the likelyhood of thy confuſion. Conſider its one ſtep to pardon, to lay to heart Gods advantage. For who are they who periſh, who carry a blacke marke of wrath about them? Surely thoſe who either acknowledge no ſuch thing, live at hearts eaſe, and elbow-roome, and come leaping forth in their chaines with *Agag*, or elſe (if they heare of it) murmur, fret, and kicke againſt it. If then thou haſt eſcaped both, one thing remaineth, eſcape alſo an unbeleeving heart: Reſt not in theſe ſuburbes of hell, but behold the freedome of mercy in the promiſe. And do not reach firſt at Election, and ſo fal backe and breake thy necke: But take this firſt worke of humiliation in thee as an hanſell of hope that more ſhall follow: and as for Gods ſecrets, they muſt attend faith, not goe before it. Therefore nakedly and without further diſpute, convince thy judgement of a poſſibility of eſcaping this advantage which God hath thee at. Not by thy ſtruggling and fighting againſt it (as *Pharaoh* againſt the waters returning) but by thy meeke and humble ſtooping under it. And know, that this doctrine of Gods ſoveraignty ſerves to try the ſpirit of men, of what mettle they are made of, and to condemne none, ſave the finally rebellious. Thoſe who ceaſe whetting at Gods ſecrets (as not belonging to them) and only betake themſelves to the ſoftly ſtreames of Siloam: beholding with ſtedfaſt eye, the freedome, bottomedneſſe, and unchangeableneſſe of the promiſe, have a marke upon them of ſuch as ſhall be ſaved, the ſoveraignty of Gods advantage againſt the poore creature notwithſtanding. Come then to the Lord and ſay, thou mayſt indeed juſtly damne me, yet thou mayſt alſo ſave mee: O Lord doe not deſtroy thy creature, let it pleaſe thee to have mercy, and deſire not the death of a poore wretch: with thee the fatherleſſe ſhall find mercy, of which I am. What boot ſhall it be for thee to have my bloud? Oh ſpare a little! let me recover my ſelfe: if thou muſt needs be juſt powre thy wrath upon deſpiſers, but ſpare the penitent, and ſuch as lye at thy feet as loſt.

7. Branch. Soveraignty is free to ſave, aſwell as to deſtroy.

1 Sam. 15.

Election not to be firſt lookt at, but the offer of grace.

Deut. 29.29.

Fightly,

2 Kings

Branch 8. Aſſay to beleeve.

Eightly, let this conviction of judgement turne thy ſoule to make an adventure, and where thou ſeeſt a breach made, there to lay the battery of faith, to aſſay an entrance into the City of grace. The Lord having cut off his plea by as ſtrong a remedy, and redemption (yea ſtronger) then ever the former advantage lay: calls thee to lay hold of it ſtrongly, in the blood and ſatisfaction of thy Redeemer. How doſt thou find thy ſelfe affected in this caſe? Whether chuſeſt thou to curſe God, and dye, or to breake and pull downe thy ſtomacke, and live? judge thy ſelfe herein acording to the rule: if ever the advantage of God dranke up thy ſpirit, how wenteſt thou to worke? didſt thou recke thy teene upon God and quarrell with him for his forſaking thee, or foughtſt thou after a way of hope, by Gods cutting off his owne advantage in his Sonne? Doſt thou behold the Lord Jeſus lying at the ſtake with thy guilt, as thy ſurety, for whoſe ſake the deadly enmity of God is abated toward thee? And doth this cauſe thee to take more thought for thy ſoule, then to diſpute with God? Well then, feed thine heart with this thought; that the Lord will ſave ſome, and whom, ſave thoſe whom its provided for; even thoſe who can beleeve that free mercy is as well worth the embracing, as ſoveraignty is worth the fearing: and therefore determine with themſelves, rather with a trembling foot to goe towards the former, then with a blaſphemous mouth to goe to hel? Leave Gods ſecrets, and try him in his revealed will, and way, he hath profeſſed that none who chuſe life ſhall dye: none ſhall endure the diſadvantage of their ſin, who come to Chriſt, as having diſcharged them from it, by bearing it for them. Chuſe then to live. *Ahab* had *Benhadad* at a great advantage. If his power had driven *Benhadad* to be ſtout and deſperate, there had beene no remedy, but he muſt have dyed upon his owne ſword. But he left the ſharpe point of his advantage, and be thought himſelfe that the Kings of Iſrael were merciſull. His ſervants put him in hope, that he might poſſibly fall into merciſull hands. This drew him to give over deſpaire, and to chuſe hope, and therefore with trembling acknowledgement of the advantage, and with ropes about their necks, he ſends to this King for releaſe, and pardon, and ſped of it. Do thou ſo and proſper; chuſe the hope, and renounce the deſpaire. All Gods people having two things ſet before them, by the one whereof they cannot chuſe but periſh, by the other they may poſſibly eſcape: they being led by the ſpirit of hope & grace, forſake bondage, terror, and deſpaire, and light uponthe other. And that conducts them by a doore of hope, to the Pallace of pardon.

1 King. 20. 33.

When thoſe lepers who were ſhut out from all company and reliefe, laid together the ſad ſpectacle of the aſſured dying in the city, with the poſſible (though periſous) hope of life in the campe of *Aram*, what did they. They put their lives in their boſomes, they counted them no more worth then a ſtraw under their feet; if they ſave us, we ſhall live (ſay they) if they kill us we are but dead men, better is it for us to die with adventuring for life, then to die here in coole bloud: and ſo they were ſaved. Doe thou ſo. Know it, there is no poore ſoule who was ever freed from Gods advantage and wrath, ſave they who gave finall free ſentence againſt themſelves, as making full account to periſh, if mercy did not ſave them at a narrow and a dead lift, even a hundred to one? Haſt thou ever paſſed this

2 Kings 7. 3. 4. Adventure upon the promiſe.

this narrow adventure? Then, though (in reſpect of thy ſelfe) its an hundred to one but thou periſh, yet in reſpect of God and his promiſe upon which (as a ſure bottome) thou ventureſt, thou canſt not but be ſaved. All the difficulty is in the adventure. Loth are men to carry their lives ſo looſe; skin for skin, and all they have, they will give for life. But they whom God hath brought to be at his uttermoſt advantage, will give over all their owne props, hopes, helpes, duties, devotions, and performances, and carry their lives in their boſome, if they periſh by venturing upon the promiſe, they periſh: but to be ſure by not beleeving they muſt periſh: He that is brought to this point, may ſay truely, if I had not periſhed, I had periſhed indeed, my periſhing was my happineſſe: In thus doing, thou haſt hope, but otherwiſe none.

Job 1.

Ninthly, yet ſo venture thy ſelfe as a forlorne wretch upon the Lord, and as one that goes not to worke at a meere hap-hazard, but (as one elſe loſt) venture upon a promiſe, as a ſure ſtay and refuge, which cannot faile thee. If thou be under this condition, the Lord puts thee not upon a meer adventure, which may prove well or ill, but upon the promiſe of the ſure mercies of *David*, whereof nothing can defeate thee. Unbeleefe may hold thee ſome while at the ſtaves end, but ſuch a one as thou art called to know, that thy feares are taken away, and turned to an hope which ſhall not be aſhamed. Take no thought for the advantage which Juſtice had thee at: the Lord will ſee to that, and hath ſeene already to it, in caſting it upon his ſonne. If thou object, but he hath onely ſo done for the Elect. I anſwer. Still goe thou to the markes of his revealed will: If thou confeſſe the advantage, to thee belongs the redreſſe which Chriſt hath merited by ſatisfying the claime of juſtice: The Lord hath laid this penalty upon one whom he loved more deerely then ever he hated thy ſinne: feare not therefore but he is appeaſed. If thou canſt humbly come in and plead it for thy ſelfe, thou art one upon whom the Lord will not ſerve himſelfe, by condemning thee; having already in the fleſh of his owne Sonne ſerved himſelfe to the uttermoſt, that thou mightſt goe free. Now the Lord hath ceaſed his plea, and turned it to a deſire, that thou wouldeſt be reconciled, which if thou art content to be, its no raſh venture, but its a taking hold upon his ſtrength to make peace: and thou ſhalt have peace. If thou wilt not eſteem of this ſtrength of offred reconciliation already wrought for thee without thy coſt to be far more precious, then the former advantage of wrath is terrible: Thou ſhalt be found to aſcribe more to the guilt of a finite creature, then to the ſatisfaction of an infinite God, and the offer of an infinite reconciliation. Come in then and lay hold upon this refuge with ſtrong conſolation: Take no more thought what becomes of the plea of juſtice, then the Lord himſelfe doth: if he will have free mercy rejoyce above ſoveraigne juſtice, why then ſhouldſt thou ſhrug at it? and why ſhould thou grudge thy ſelfe that which God can beteamed thee and ſo deſtroy thy ſelfe, rather then ſet thy ſeale to his offer to be happy? True it is, thou haſt beene ſo ſoaked under the former anguiſh of the Lords juſtice and advantage, that thou canſt not ſo eaſily forget it, and the newes of this mercy ſeemes an incredible thing unto thee: but remember that the Lord is willing thou out-grow thy feares by degres: though it be not ſuddenly done, yet be not ſullen and wilfull,

9. Branch. Venture not at hap-hazard, but upon a ſure ſtay.

Eſay 55.3.

Object.
Anſw.

Eſay 53.

Eſay 27.5.

Heb. 5. end.

2 Kings

wilfull, and time ſhall work it: mercy ſhall in time ſubdue thy ſuſpicious heart: Incline onely; have a comming ſoule to this offer, and the Lord who ſuffred thee long in thy rebellions, ſhall much more be patient toward thee in thy timorous and weake approaches toward his grace; he ſhall ſpare thee as a father ſpares his child that feares him; and thy ſmoaking flax ſhall not be put out, nor thy bruiſed reed be broken, through thy conflict with the drudgery of thy diſtruſtfull heart: Reach only at this ſtrength, as able to ſave thee, and as belonging to thee, and nothing ſhall come betweene cup and lip to defeat thee: Death it ſelfe ſhall but haſten the promiſe for thee: when the fruit is come to the birth, this ſtrength of the promiſe ſhall bring it forth. Wait thou quietly, and be doing good, and thy judgement ſhall breake out into victory: Whatſoever thy weake beginnings were, thy encreaſes ſhall be great: Believe it and reſt thy ſelfe, for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.

Eſay 55.4.

Pſal. 103.

Mat. 12.

Job 8.7.

Laſtly, to end, remember, that in beleeving this promiſe, thou doſt not diſhonour the Lord, but glorifie him, above whatſoever elſe thou canſt doe for him. Its his ſcope to ſhut thee up under this ſoveraignty of his juſtice, and ſhew thee his uttermoſt advantage: that he may trie thee whether the ſenſe thereof will draw thee to his ends or no: That is, when thou heareſt of a free grace above and beyond this juſtice, purchaſed by his deare Sonne: that they who beleeve it, may glorifie all his whole excellent union of Attributes in one, and confeſſe him to be moſt juſt, wiſe, powerfull, and gracious, in his way of redemption, above the grace of creation: I ſay, he doth trie thee whether thou wilt give him that excellent glory which he hath ſought to himſelfe by occaſion of thy ruine. If thine heart then can freely beteame him this glory, and more fully empty it ſelf in the glorifying of him, then in thy own eſcaping the former advantage: know it, thou ſhalt honour him above all other honour, in thy beleeving. And by thy diſtruſt, and ſealing up thy heart under the darkeneſſe, bondage and feare of thy former guilt, (whatſoever Satan and unbeleefe tell thee) ſure it is thou goeſt the next way to croſſe God of his purpoſed intention to glorifie himſelf marveilouſly in thy pardon and ſalvation. And therefore inſtead of his being admired in thee becauſe thou beleeveſt: he juſtly will be admired in thy double vengeance, becauſe it was not enough for thee once to ſinne in *Adam*, but thou addeſt drunkenneſſe to thirſt, in denying that grace which would have taken occaſion by thy ſinne, to ſettle an infinite glory upon himſelf, and far better eſtate upon thee, then *Adams* innocency could have done. And ſo much for this ſecond uſe of exhortation.

9. Branch Faith is the greateſt glory, that the ſoule can yeeld to God.

2 Theſſ. 1. 8.

Vſe 2. Humliation to all ſorts in reſpect of Gods having us at ſo infinite advantage.

Secondly, this point ſhould be humiliation to all ſorts, becauſe the Lord hath even the beſt at ſundry petty advantages, in each particuler concerning this fraile life. Although he have releaſed the maine advantage, by forgiving us: yet, ſo long as ſinne, and this body of death abideth, ſo long all the penalties abide, incident to our nature: our Lord Jeſus himſelfe all the daies of his abaſement and fleſh endured them, and we much more muſt ſtoop under them, that we might be conformed to his ſufferings. How ſhould it pull downe our carnall preſumption and jollity to conſider, that even while we are hearing the word, the Lord might ſtop our breath, (as the breath of one almoſt, was while this point

was

2 Kings

was in handling, being a ſleepe at the ſermon) which of us ſtand not at Gods curteſie for ſomewhat which others are deprived of. How is our fraile life on the ſudden, intercepted? how many are choked with their meate, nay have bin choked with a Fly, or a raiſon ſtone? how many make their beds their graves? in the midſt of their feaſting, their mirth, talke, and company, arreſted with the ſtroke of Gods hand? how many have made their feaſting cheare, to be the cheare for their funerall? how many are ſlaine by the high way by the fall of their horſe? others have their eie laſht out by a twig in their travaile? *Abſolon* is ſnatcht up, by his long head locks, by a ſhrag of an oake; when we are ſecure of our children, lo one is ſcald with water, another drowned in it, another burnt with fire, other come to other ſad caſualties: All to teach us to humble our ſoules each day before God, and confeſſe the many juſt advantages he hath us at; us I ſay and ours, and that, ſalvation is from the Lord: we take it for granted, if we have tilled our grounds, we ſhall have a ſowing ſeaſon at our pleaſure, if we have ſowne our ſeed, and waited our time we ſhall have our crop, and if we have carried it into our barne, we ſhall threſh and eat of our travaile: and ſo (ordinarily) we doe, through mercy: yet we are ſtill at Gods advantage in all, by wet, by drought, by fire, and vermine, and an hundred waies, all to teach us, God is not ſo tyed to us, or to the meanes and husbandry we uſe, no nor to his promiſe neither, but that our preſumption, infidelity and unthankefulneſſe may provoke him to uſe his prerogative, and to deſtroy all: that ſo we may walke with more awe and feare before this our God who is a conſuming fire: and teach us daily and nightly, to ſhut up our ſelves and ours in the Arke of his protection: to ariſe up, to dreſſe our ſelves, to eat, to worke, to walke, to converſe, to lye downe, with an humble, thankefull heart, neither as ſlaves, nor yet as preſumers, but as thoſe whom the Lord hath at a perpetuall advantage, and may uſe it if hee will, and if hee ſhould ſay (as he might better ſay it, then that boaſting *Benhadad* did) All thy wives, children are mine, all thy gold and ſilver is mine, thy treaſures alſo and all thy wealth is mine: yea, if he ſhould lay his hand upon all or any (as which of them is not ſubject to caſualty?) thy friends were in thine owne hands. Oh! with how narrow an eye and foot, and how ſoberly would we uſe each bleſſing if we were bound in a ſtatute to a creditor, to ſurrender all at an houres warning, and ſtood at his curteſie for the bread we eat? Would we then take our fill, or the uttermoſt liberty of our commodities? Even ſo let us walke humbly before God who is our Soveraigne, and hath our lives, wealth, and perſons at command, in a moment to ſurprize us. Let us daily take all as ſent us from his hand, let us uſe all humbly and purely as if we uſed them not, let us count our ſelves daily to be in jeopardy, and bid adiew daily to all comforts here below, yea life it ſelfe. As an holy man being asked over night, whether he would goe to ſuch a place to morrow, or no; anſwered, I thanke God, I have known no morrow theſe twenty yeares. A ſigne, with what an humble, ſober heart he uſed life it ſelfe, and much more all inferior comforts, whoſe tenant at will he confeſſed himſelfe to be, and with what an heart he commended his ſpirit into the hands of him that gave it, as oft as he lay downe to his reſt. And ſure it is the little acknowledging of this

God is not tyed to us in outward protection alwaies.

Deut. 33. 12.

1 King. 20. 2. 3.

Note,

Soveraignty

2 Kings

Soveraignty and ſalvation of God, is the cauſe why many of us are compelled to learne it, by ſad experience, who elſe might enjoy it with more freedome.

Gods not being tyed to us in grace, urges Prayer for daily aſſiſting grace as very neceſſary.

The like I might ſpeake touching Gods ſpirituall ſafeguard of our ſoules, and the ſalvation of his Church. The Lord is not abſolutely tyed to us in theſe reſpects. We ſhould humble our ſoules for theſe alſo, and ſay, thou canſt (Lord) if thou wilt, vouchafe me ſuch a meaſure of comfort by beleeving, peace in my conſcience, admiration at thy love, burning zeale for thy glory, compaſſion and brokenneſſe of heart for my breaches of covenant and daily failings: Thou haſt the key of the wombe, of heaven, of the deepes, the grave, and of mine heart: Lord the reſtraints or enlargements thereof are from thee: Thou haſt promiſed, thy grace ſhall be ſufficient: but my wretched, proud, defiled ſoule may provoke thee to ſhrinke in thy graces, thy rolling of bowels and openneſſe of ſpirit: But yet thou art the ſoveraigne Lord of thine owne good things, thou canſt if thou wilt, remoove my tickling heart after the world, mine envy, pride, hypocriſie: Thou canſt (if thou wilt) purge out my ſloth, deadneſſe, hardneſſe of heart, ſecurity, unthankefulneſſe, and the like! Oh Lord theſe cauſe me to walke ſadly, and to grone daily for eaſe! Oh that thy good pleaſure were to perfect thy firſt grace, with this ſecond aſſiſtance and efficacy, and to caſt in all thoſe promiſes to the firſt, which concerne mortification and a new creature. Oh that I might not provoke thee by my wilfulneſſe and unbeliefe to reſtraine the influence of heaven from mee, and to make thy clowdes as braſſe, and mine heart as iron! Lord thou mayſt in thy ſoveraigne free grace enlarge thy ſelfe! let not my baſe rebellious diſtempers dry up the welſpring of thy promiſes.

2 Cor. 12. 7. Eſai. 63. 13.

God gives not account of all his matters.

And to conclude, the Lord is a ſoveraigne God alſo in reſpect of his adminiſtration of his whole militant Church. Although ſhe be his ſpouſe, and hath a right to all his goodneſſe: yet God gives not an account of all his matters, nay oftentimes, ſhe incurres a premunire with God, and by her former, lazy, Laodicean temper of a fulſome, careleſſe, ſurfeted ſpirit, deſerves that the Lord ſhould uſe his ſoveraignty and prerogative of diſcipline over her, for her correction and amendment. Therefore although he take not his loving kindneſſe from her yet, her Lethargy and Palſey frame, her wearineſſe and contempt of his ordinances and their power, may cauſe him to chaſten her with the rods of men. Now we are (in ſuch caſes of wanting the meanes, of injury and violence of times, encroaching of enemies, inundation of errors and profaneneſſe, and decay of love and zeale in the better ſort) very prone to taxe Gods wiſedome, and call him to our barre, as if we would teach him more wiſedome. But alas! the Lord is a ſoveraigne God, and knowes what phyſicke our maladies require, he knowes our ruſt will not be filed off without much rubbing and ſcowring: He lookes at the generall ends of his providence, which are to puniſh ſeverely, the declenſions and revolts of ſuch as profeſſe his Name: let us not wonder that our praiers ſticke in their aſcent, and prevaile little: we looke ſtill at meanes and ordinances, to be ſtill as we have beene, but the Lord lookes at the melting and purging out our droſſe, and trying us whether we be reprobate ſilver or no. In this caſe, what ſhall we doe? call for our prayers backe againe, and

Sins of the Church, the cauſe of Gods hiding himſelfe.

See Jer. 12. 1. 2.

give

give the Lord over? No ſurely: let us know we can goe no whither to ſpeed better, if we leave him: but confeſſe his ſoveraigne power might force him to a decree againſt us:& lie low,licking the duſt of his feet,with *Ioſia* and his people, ſtriving as much againſt the ſtreame as we can, and craving our owne lives may be given us as a prey, if we can ſpeed for no more; but however, not forſaking our covenant nor giving him over, through a ſullen diſcontented heart, till either he plead our cauſe and bring forth our light, or elſe make our poore lives tolerable in the midſt of our ſorrowes,and teach us wiſely and faithfully to ſerve our time. So much for the ſecond Uſe.

2 Kings

John 6.68. 2 King.23. 2.3.&c. Jer.45.5. Pſalm.119. Mica 7.9.

Thirdly, this doctrine is confutation and reproofe of the enemies of Gods ſoveraignty, or the cavillers, and abuſers of it. Firſt, all ſuch as take away the ground of this ſoveraignty of God. For if it be ſo as many dreame, that man is only in a darke dungeon, yet ſtill hath his eyes in his head, to ſee and apprehend light if it be offred: and a liberty of will by the benefit of light, to embrace and receive it: ſure it is, God hath not man at ſuch a deepe advantage as we ſpeake of: ye muſt marke, all the grace of ſuch men is the will of the fleſh, upon generall enlightning. Secondly, all that fight againſt the royall freedome of Gods diſpenſation of grace by the meanes, to ſome and not to others: both being every way alike, I ſay equally diſtant from it, or from any propenſion and accommodation toward it, either within or without! Oh! it frets them to the very heart to heare, that there ſhould be any ſuch liberty aſcribed to God! They confeſſe that on mans part there may be ſome barres to hinder grace: But they cannot endure it, that when the object lyes indifferently diſpoſed, then ſoveraignty ſhould reject, or receive upon meere will, no reaſon at all appearing: this curs them to the heart, that they may not bind the hands of God behind him, to carry himſelfe alike to all, who lye in equall and faire correſpondence to it: But O ye wretches! goe learne what this meanes, not of the willer, or the runner, but of mercy. Not our making toward grace,but graces making towards us,ſaves us. Thirdly, it reproves our carnall vanity, who in our thoughts will be bold to prefer ſuch to Gods grace as pleaſe us well for their gifts, hearings, repeatings of ſermons, doing duties, and forwardneſſe: without teaching them to humble their ſoules, and caſt out their Phariſaicall ſpirit, which hinders more then all their gifts further them! Oh! as thoſe Jewes ſpake of that Ruler, that he deſerved he ſhould doe him the favour of healing: ſo theſe thinke it were but reaſonable that God ſhould grant mercy, to ſuch a towardly and zealous childe, or novice. But as that Ruler hearing of their words to Chriſt, came himſelfe and abaſed himſelfe, caſt off his merit, and his building of a Synagogue, profeſſing himſelfe unworthy under whoſe roofe Chriſt ſhould come, and ſo prevailed: ſo muſt thou deale with the ſoveraignty of mercy, if ever it be thine. No, no, not the appearances of man can bind the Lord, but his free love muſt overrule him. The moſt poore, deſpiſed, impotent, and ſilly wench among all thy brood may ſpeed of mercy, when the braveſt,wittieſt, and hopefulleſt of thē goes without. Look at none,deſpiſe none by the outward ſemblance: Grace is free: who knowes but thou mayſt be an inſtrument of ſoveraignty, to breed ſome ſavor of mercy, even in that wife of thine, which

Vſe 3. Confutation of all Cavellers againſt the Soveraignty of God.

1. Sort.

2. Sort.

Rom.9.

3. Sort.

Matth.8.

2 Kings

hath long beene moſt averſe in ſpirit, in that poore drudge of the kitchin, who hath come laſt to prayers, that child, which of all the reſt ſeemes of leaſt capacity? its not the eaſineſſe of our heart to accept, nor the rebellion thereof to refuſe, but the invincibleneſſe of the Lords ſoule, who cannot be pulled from his Elect, and the efficacy of grace, and powerfull mercy, which carries the will of the creature before it (not by compelling or neceſſitating of it) but by a ſweete perſwaſion and drawing it by his owne cordes to beleeve it: making it of nilling, willing, and of willingable, and effectuall to embrace it.

4. Sort.

Fourthly, it muſt ſtop all the baſe cavills of men: Oh! ſaith one, I have ſpent the beſt part of ſeven yeares to obtaine a broken heart, and cannot get it! I ſee ſuch and ſuch can ſo melt, and be ſo lowly, upon the firſt hearing of the Word, and grow to ſome meaſure of faith, in ſhort time, as is incredible. Surely if I had belonged to God, I had long ſince been accepted! Why? Is not God the ſoveraigne giver or denier, the furtherer or delayer of his owne grace? Is not mercy his owne, to give at his pleaſure? Is it not thank-worthy if thou get it at the eleventh houre, even upon the Croſſe with the theefe? Is God tyed? Is he not ſometime found of them that ſeeke him not? who never dreamt of him, but walked in their ignorance, and jolly in their lawleſſe way? And doth he not ſuffer ſome that ſeeke him with a Phariſaicall heart, to goe without? yea, although they ſeeke him humbly, and painefully, doth not he know his owne beſt ſeaſon? Is thine eye evill becauſe his is good? doth he tie himſelfe alway to one courſe? No ſurely, ſome he inclines to the meanes and breeds an hope a farre off, others he holds under the meanes a long time in darkeneſſe: the truth is, he is tyed to no courſe, to no perſons, ſeaſons, meanes, or meaſures. Turne thine impatience to humble ſelfe-deniall, and adore God in his liberty: goe to worke aright, and aſcribe to no meanes, nor to thy ſelfe, but his meere good pleaſure, and this will prove the neerer way home, though it ſeeme further about. Fifthly, doe not abuſe this doctrine, to foreſtall thy care in the uſe of meanes: Doe not waxe out of meaſure wicked in ſhaking of all diligence to heare, becauſe God hath the whole ſtrength in his owne hand, to determine as he pleaſes. But know, that as the end, ſo the meanes, and the ordering thereof, is in his hands. Wouldſt thou deny thy ſelfe all ſuccors of the creature to feed and cheriſh thee, becauſe if the Lord have appointed thee to live, thou ſhalt live? and if to dye, no meanes ſhall ſuſtaine thee? Alſo doe not by this doctrine, diſorder the ſecret and revealed will of God, but reverendly diſtinguiſh and obſerve both. The one is that by which hee hath determined the ends: The other whereby he appoints the duties of men: The one is unknowne to thee: adore it, but ſnare not thy ſelfe with it: let not that foreſtall thy care and diligence in uſe of the meanes appointed by the revealed will. Say not thus, if I knew my ſelfe ordained to ſalvation, I would apply my ſelfe willingly to them: but how doe I know whether I belong to God, and ſhall not uſe the meanes in vaine to encreaſe my judgement? I anſwer thee, Election is not revealed to any to encourage them to uſe meanes, or beleeve. But meanes of faith are offered to incourage to beleeve. The knowledge of Election (in ſuch as attaine it) flowes from faith, not faith from it. Fall thou to the

Eſay 65.1.

God courſes in the drawing home of his, very divers.

5. Sort.

6. Sort.

Gods will double with the difference.

Queſt. Anſw.

2 Kings

the meanes as God offers them: which ſhall bee a ſigne unto thee of an humble and plaine heart: and deſcant not upon that thou knoweſt not (a ſigne of a froward, rebellious ſpirit.) Thou art in the dungeon: the Lord offers thee a ladder to come out, cords and rags to hale thee up. As *Ebedmelec* did to *Ieremy*. Should *Ieremy* ſtanding in his mire, have felt more will to deſcant upon *Ebedmelecs* purpoſe in the caſting in of rags and cords, then deſire to apply himſelf to the way of comming out, might he not have lyen long enough there? but if God have given thee the heart of *Ieremy*, to tremble at the dungeon: thou wilt not find leaſure to quarrel with *Ebedmelec*, what his meaning is unto thee, but ſimply judge his meaning by his act, his love by his cords: and ſay, thou mayſt leave me here ſtill with my cordes upon my ſhoulders, but it ſeemes not ſo by thy offer, for then thou mightſt have ſpared this labor. Therefore, I obey thy charge, and truſt thee for drawing me up, who gaveſt me thy cords! and when I am drawne out, then will I ſay, now I know thy good will by the effect thereof. Doe ſo in this caſe, and proſper. And ſo much for this ſecond generall, ariſing from the whole context. And alſo for this time. Let us pray, &c.

Jerem. 38.11.

THE SECOND LECTVRE VPON THE NINTH VERSE.

9 *So Naaman came with his horſes and charets, and ſtood before the dore of Eliſha.*

10 *And Eliſha ſent a meſſenger, &c.*

WEE come now (beloved) more cloſely to the words themſelves: and begin with this ninth verſe (as an introduction to the points following to the twentieth) although it containe none of the five generalls which I intend chiefely to dwell upon, yet it is the key to unlocke the doore of entrance upon all: It containes the immediate occaſion of the miraculous cure and converſion of *Naaman*: and of thoſe antecedent paſſages which lead unto it; both the meſſage of *Eliſha* and *Naamans* entertaining thereof, of which after. But for this ninth verſe, ſithence it hath in it ſome maine points of doctrine, which depend upon the connexion of former verſes, we muſt open them firſt, as all points gathered out of hiſtoricall dependance, require the annalyſe of the ſtory before going. Thus then briefly the ſtory leads us to this verſe. Firſt, it preſents to us a noble man (*Naaman* by name) Earle Marſhall to the King of Aram, a man of great valor and courage for warre, and of as great acceptation and eſteeme with his Lord, (being his chiefe favorite, upon whom

Entrance upon the ninth verſ.

Containing the Antecedents of the cure of Naaman.

The Analyſe of the whole Hiſtory from the firſt verſe, 1. Branch.

2 Kings

the King leaned:) yet a leper, and as much held under with his filthy noysome malady, as set up by his dignity. And surely if we had not some sowre sawce to our sweet meat we should surfet: if all were according to our desires without check who should live with us? Secondly, wee have here a providence of God offering to *Naaman* the newes of a recovery. For whereas in some former skirmishes, the Aramites had taken prisoners of the Israelites, and among the rest, a young Damosell; lo, it was her lot to be taken into the service of *Naamans* wife. The maide (whether out of a better observation of *Elisha*, then ordinary, and remembring what worthy acts she had heard of him: or whether out of a desire to win favor at the hands of her Mistrisse) seeing how the case stood with her Master, and perceiving well how welcome an addition the cure of his leprosie would prove, to all his other happinesse; calls to minde the Prophet *Elisha*, telling her Mistrisse that if her Master were but with him, he would soone heale him of it. A speciall and first handsell of providence, swaying her to be the first happy moover in this frame of miraculous cure. Thirdly, we have *Naamans* inquisitivenesse and restlessenesse, upon the hearsay: For a mans desire he will soone separate himselfe. So doth he: lets all matters lye by, and seekes out immediately how to compasse his purpose: and in the first place, using the interest he had with his master the King, to write letters in his behalfe, to the King of Israel (who now was the vassall of Aram, and therefore at his command to doe what he could, to content him) he obtained his desire. The summe whereof comes to this, that although no letters were directed in speciall to *Elisha*: yet because it was supposed that there was no subject of *Iehorams*, who might not quickly be at call to serve his turne in the working of the cure: therefore (as it became a King) he writes to the King of Israel, to see the businesse dispatched.

2. Branch.

The 3. Branch. Prov. 18. 1. 2.

Fourthly, we have a great blur and disaster here in the attempt of *Naaman*: a greater difficulty affronts his hopes then he feared, to crosse him in his cure. For, the stupid King of Israel, (having small entercourse, and lesse interest in the Prophet of God) mistakes the letter, and the scope of it, and construes it to a sinister sense, *viz.* that a quarrel was pickt with him, he rends his cloathes, and askes am I God to heale lepers? which doubtlesse, he had not said, if his thoughts had bin upon the Prophets miraculous assistance two chapters before, when he was in a distresse, for lack of water. Here therefore the worke stands at a stay. Fifthly, therefore the Lord (whose worke it was to bring *Naaman* thus farre within the Element of mercy and cure) doth not faile, but puts in life to the businesse: and checks the senceleste King by a messenger sent from *Elisha*; who upbraiding him for his sottish ignorance, prompts him with that truth which corrects *Naamans* mistake, saying: although thou canst not heale him thy selfe, yet be it knowne to thee, Israel hath a God who hath a Prophet, even *Elisha* by name, to whom if thou send this man, he will heale him of his leprosie. Upon this message the text tells us, that *Naaman* forsaking the King (who could doe him no good) comes now (full of courage and good hopes) that although he had miscarried hitherto, yet now, at last, he should without any more adoe, speed of his journey. And therefore he with his horses and charets come downe and stand before the doore of

Branch 4.

2 King. 3. 5. 6.

5. Branch.

of *Eliſha*. Thus we ſee the coherence, and have the patient ſtanding humbly at the doore of the Prophet, forgetting his ſtate, and being at the curteſie of the Prophet for his cure. Now for the laſt of theſe.

Two generals in this ninth verſe.

Vid. cap.

Two things I would commend unto you out of this verſe. The former is, the habit and behaviour of this great Prince, and favorite *Naaman*, being now at the doore of the Prophet. Wee heare of no rapping or bounſing at his gate, ſuch as is mentioned of *Iehoram* in *Cap.* 7. who ſent a curſed meſſenger before him to beat downe the doore upon the Prophet and Elders, (met in a holy ſort before God in the judgement of famine) and following himſelfe, with a bloody threatning, and ſwearing ſpirit, God doe ſo and more, if the head of *Eliſha* ſtand upon him this day: But all humble, and lowly carriage, ſuch as became a petitioning Patient, who though he brought fees enough with him, yet could ſpeed no way, ſave by waiting and obeying. This behaviour may ſeeme ſtrange in ſo potent a Prince at ſo meane an houſe as the Prophets, and toward a man in ſhew ſo farre inferior, as a poore old man to a Kings favorite. Surely theſe daies would ſcarce affords us ſuch a patterne of humbleneſſe, in great ones toward Gods Miniſters. But the reaſon was, *Naaman* had, and felt that burden and clog within, which beat off proud thoughts: not only the honour of the Prophet, and divineneſſe of the cure awed him: but the yoak which was upon him, ſubdued all hautineſſe, ſuppreſſed all ſtomacke, and pride, telling him, as the caſe ſtood, it was no ſeaſon for him to take upon him imperiouſly; He was now fighting a new battel, wherein not his armes, but his patience muſt beare maſtries. Doubtleſſe, his great ſpirits might riſe, and provoke him to inſolency; but ſtill he minded his errand, aand for the time, thought it fitteſt to ſtoope leſt he ſhould looſe the maine, his cure hoped for, this amed him and kept him low: ſtanding with all his pompous retinue at the poore gate of poore *Eliſha*, waiting, and glad to waite for a favourable anſwer.

1. Generall. Naamans humble carriage.

The point I would urge, is this, the only ſeaſon of working a jolly and ſtout heart to crouch and creepe, is, when God hath it at a bay, even to ſtand at his curteſie in ſome great ſtraight and extermity. It was thus with *Naaman*, and is thus generally, with moſt men who are not of deſperate madneſſe: And, the point is generall (although I ſhall touch it after in a ſpeciall ſence by the text) and applyable both to good and bad. A more wilfull and wicked contrariety hereto, we cannot have then that of *Iehoram* which I named, who thought to fight it out with God, when the famine pinched him, and to kill the Prophet: and yet (to goe no further then himſelfe confuting himſelfe) when hee and *Iehoſhaphat* and a third King went againſt the King of Moab, Cap. 3. and was at a ſtraight like to periſh for lacke of water, both he and the Armies: behold what a change it wrought on the ſudden? For then he ſeekes to the Prophet, and bemones the ſtraight in which the Army was, making no other account, but that God might juſtly ſuffer them all to periſh. And when *Eliſha* diſdained to looke at him, yet his fiery ſpirit held it ſelfe in, by compulſion, from any miſdemeanor. So that he muſt bee a monſter of men whom a deepe ſtraight will not ſubdue and tame unto the ſtooping to any conditions. I grant this may ſometime prove only an act of policy, or of carnall feare, and ſo ceaſe. We read of a royall ſpirited Emperour *Henry* the fourth

Doctrine. Great ſtraights are Gods ſeaſon to pull downe a ſtout heart.

2 Kings

of Germany who being wearied with the tyranny of ſundry Popes, and of *Alexander* by name: was at laſt by his roaring Bulls and excommunications (which in thoſe daies ſcared the greateſt) brought to ſuch an exigent, that he with his Empreſſe and their young ſon, were faine to ſtaud 3. daies barefoot at the proud Popes gate: And being after admitted to his preſence, when he was urged to lye proſtrate before him, the Pope treading upon his necke, and ſpurning off his Crowne with his foot: although the ſpirit of the Emperour could have rebelled, and beganne to diſdaine it, yet for policy ſake, he was compelled to deſiſt. Its noted in Judges that when the Ammonites oppreſſed Iſrael: the Elders of Gilead and brethren of *Iptha* (who before had thruſt him out for a baſtard) being in a ſtraight for a Captaine, were compelled to goe to *Iptha* to crave his returne, and to undertake the warre; and when he caſt them in the teeth with their former injurious caſting him out, yet the extremity they were in, humbled them, and kept them downe ſo, that they were glad to take ſhame to themſelves, and to begge aide even of that baſtard, when they ſaw their welfare lay bleeding at the ſtake, and none fit to helpe them but himſelfe. Theſe are but common naturall inſtances: yet they lay forth the point thus farre, that the naturall ſpirit of the hautieſt, and moſt diſdainefull man toward ſuch as himſelfe, will abate and come downe when an exigent is upon them: And the like may be ſaid of man toward God, when they are laid upon his bayard, and when he hath them upon the hip by any deepe and ſtraight ſore and extremity. Yea, it is true even of Gods owne deare people, already in Covenant with him: whoſe ſlaviſh hearts have often been compelled by Gods Chaines upon them, to forget their jollity and ſenſuall appetite, and to ſtoope to Gods power under their ſtraights. That which I formerly ſpake of the Soveraignty of Gods Nature, I may here verifie of the outward extremities which he brings us into: Both ſerve to bring downe the heart and to make it humble and ſubject. *Iob* was an holy man, yet ſuch naturall ſcurffe the Lord ſaw to lurke in his ſpirit, that he was faine, by the loſſe of all his ſubſtance, children, health of body, the enmity of his friends, the terrors upon his ſoule, the admonition of *Elihu*, and the Lords owne tawing of him by the view of all his power, and the terror of *Leviathan* and *Behemoth*; at laſt to wring this ſpeech from him, Cap. 42. I abhorre my ſelfe in duſt and aſhes. *Hezekiah* alſo was a godly King, but his treaſures and wealth and elbow-roome made him ſo fledge and jolly, that he forgat himſelfe, till the Lord ſmot him with the plague, put him in feare of his life, and urged him to ſay, I will walke all the reſt of my daies ſoftly, in the bitterneſſe of my ſoule, in the midſt of my houſe. The Lord had him upon the hip, and then he could crouch. *Elija*, *Ionas*, *David*, and *Salomon*, all holy men, yet till they were frayed with the thunder and earthquake: caſt into the Whales belly, ſtraighted betweene the choice of either famine, warre, or peſtilence, and the like: ſaw not into the frowardneſſe, rebellion, and ſtoutneſſe of their ſpirit.

Judg. 10.

Job 42.3.

Eſay 38.15.

1 King. 19.12. 13.

Jonah 1. & 2.

1 Sam. 24.

But of all others, it is trueſt of ſuch ſpirits as the Lord ſubdues to himſelfe and drawes out of a curſed ſinfull courſe. Such as this patterne in our text reſembles, *Naaman* I meane: for although as yet he was not privy to Gods purpoſe towards him in this abaſing of his ſtout heart, yet he was

(in

(in Gods diſpenſation) now in the way unto it, and by this as a ſtep came to the other. The prodigall (who is a true mirror in all points of a debaucht ſinner and fugitive from God) was faine to be purſued ſo narrowly by the hand of God, that till there was no poſſibility of ſubſiſtence for him any way, he never thinkes of a father. and leſſe of returne, and leaſt of humbling himſelfe. But when hee was brought to an abſolute ſtraight and could no longer hold out, his great ſtomacke and reſolution never to ſee his father, begins to quaile, and then his father began to favor with him. Luk. 14. 15. 16.

It is with the ſpirit of a ſinfull Rebell againſt God, as it is with a City beſieged by a ſtrong enemy: but the City having both abundance of outworkes, and ſtrong forts raiſed up, with plenty of proviſion within: beſides ſtore of brave ſouldiers who will ſpend the laſt drop of their heart blood, ere it be ſaid, they are cowards, ſcorne to yeeld their City. But when long time of aſſault, the inſtance and unweariedneſſe of the beſieging army, hath battered downe all their forts, murdered all their Souldiers with the Canon, beaten downe their Citie over their eares, houſes, Temples, walls: and opened a wider breach for entrance then they can make up againe, beſides the exhauſting of all corne and victuall within, and intercepting all ſuccors from without: Then perhaps (when no remedy elſe from forraine aide appeares) they will hang out the white flag, and cry for conditions of ſurrender: but before, nothing but ſcorne and defiance will be admitted. Even ſo is it with the unregenerate ſoule, ſhee pleaſes her ſelfe with her falſe treaſure, the perſwaſion that ſhe is rich and full and happy, and yet perhaps remaines meerely ignorant, or at leaſt in a formall and dangerous eſtate, inſenſible of wrath or danger: This ſtate ſhe findes eaſe in, and when the Lord would hunt her out of it, ſhe fits upon her Idolls ſecurely and will not ſtirre: She imbarkes her ſelfe in this error, by the conceit of her wealth, health, youth, outward contents, want of croſſes, credit, good ſucceſſe: how can God hate her, giving her all theſe? if the Lord drive her out of theſe outworkes, yet ſhe runs into ſtronger forts, compares her ſelfe with others worſe then her ſelfe, pleads her civility, innocency of life, good parts, devotions, and moralities: if God ferret her out of this burrow, ſhe will annexe and apply her ſelfe to Chriſt (after a faſhion) for aide, and entrench her ſelfe within her duties, teares, good affections, zealous performances, good opinion of others: if this fort be battered, ſhee will ſtill betake her ſelfe to her ſeeming ſelfe-deniall in many things, forfeit of her will, of ſundry luſts, pleaſures, bad company, and redeeme ſelfe with ſome forfeit of ſelfe: Shee will not bee pulled out of her Caſtle of ſelfe-conceit, nor give up her counterfeit ſufficiency and treaſure within, for any withour, one bird in hand is worth two in the buſh: Till at length, cuſtome and confirmed error doe ſo harden her, that ſhe will ſooner part with her life, then her falſe happineſſe, or reſigne up her bulwarkes and City to Chriſt and his beſieging Army. Simile. The outworkes and forts of the ſoule againſt God.

In ſuch a caſe what muſt the Lord doe? Surely either give her quite over as impregnable; and raiſe his ſiege, or elſe reſolve to put her to the uttermoſt ſtraights that can be: Sometime by blaſting her beſt bleſſings, and with ſome deadly diſeaſe taking off the edge of worldly content: See Deut. 29. 19. The ſiege of God to ſuch a ſoule.

making

2 Kings

making her ſoule to loath dainty meate, or putting a ſurfet and fulſom eneſſe into all which ſhe enjoyes, that ſhe cannot taſte them: or letting in a veine of vengeance into conſcience, convincing her that all is not well, ſo that nothing can comfort her, ſhe is Gods enemy, an hypocrite, an unbeleever, wants the promiſe, lives without God in the world, never was humbled, broken, denyed her ſelfe, never was loſt nor forſaken, and therefore never was out of her owne bottome, to live in another ſtocke and roote of Chriſt. When the Lord mixes himſelfe really with croſſes, with terrors, with law, or Goſpell to convince the ſoule either of ſinne, or righteouſneſſe, then ſhe begins to feele a ſtraight, and to be at a loſſe: elſe ſhe is merry: and ſo long as ſhe hath one ragge to cover her filthineſſe, one penny in her purſe, one cruſt to gnaw upon, one ſhred to hang by, ſhe will be cloathed, rich, full, and compleate, Chriſt ſhall never heare of her. It muſt be an hard beſetting with a narrow ſtraight, which ſtrips her, and robbes her of her ſelfe-ſufficiency. Therfore *Elihu* (*Iob Cap.*33.) under that one inſtance of ſickneſſe; ſweetly compares the ſtate of an unregenerate perſon before ſtraights come, with the eſtate when they are upon him. Before (ſaith he) God ſpeakes once and twice, by promiſes, and by bleſſings, but man heares like the Adder with a deafe eare: ſhe makes waſh-way of patience, word, conſcience and all. But when the Lord afflicts both Conſcience and body at once, the one with terrours and affrightments in the night (when men ſhould ſleepe) the other with a conſumption in his parts, ſo that his bones ſticke out and clatter, his ſoule loathes dainty meat, his moiſture is ſpent, and the buriers and mourners gape for him: Then, in this ſtraight, if an interpreter come and declare his righteouſneſſe, and ſet him at liberty, he ſhall be welcome: Why? Oh becauſe God hath aſſwaged his pride! and tamed him ſo, that whereas before he was too high for any man to talke with, now being on the rack, you may have him at any termes, and willing to come to any conditions. Surely ſo it is in any other kinde of ſtraight, whereby the licentious ſpirit of man is ſubdued and ſcared: while that laſteth, the man is in a quite contrary frame, to that he was in at liberty.

Job 33.14.15.

Revel.3.18.

Reaſon 1. And what reaſon may be given hereof? *viz.* Why the ſoule is beſt in caſe to deale withall under an exigent then otherwiſe? I anſwer. Firſt, a ſtraight calls in and limits the ſpirit which before went at large, and no compaſſe would hold it: It brings the heart into bounds. The ſicke bed is narrrow, the ſicke conſcience is upon ſtrict termes with God: whereas health and ſecurity make men wilde, like the Roe or wilde Aſſe. Who ſhall yoake an Unicorne to the plow? But the Lord having a man upon the hip, can make him ſtoope to it. The very ſhe Aſſe, when ſhe is in her monthes may bee a taken in a pit: cannot riſe and runne away, ſhe is in a ſtraight, her big body will not ſuffer her to eſcape. Now, whomſoever the Lord converts, he will narrow their courſe, and bring them to a ſhort account: till then there is no talking with them. Secondly, by an extremity, the Lord makes the creature underſtand his power over it, and that it hath a ſuperior to controll it: whereas before it acknowledged no Lord or controller, but it ſelfe. Thirdly, it abaſes and pulls downe the error of the heart, and the ſelfe-love of it, which preſented all things in a falſe view to it, and removed all feare and ſuſpicion farre off,

Job 39.9.

Jerem.2.14.

Reaſon 2.

Reaſon 3.

ſo

ſo that as *Paul* without the law was jolly and alive, ſo is this living without any bands or chaines. Now, under a ſtraight it reflects upon it ſelfe ſome ſad notions of feare, ſinne, guilt, wrath, judgement, ſo that the caſe is much changed. Fourthly, it abaſes the pride of the heart, conceit of it ſelfe, rebellion againſt God, and makes it crouch, as knowing there is no fighting againſt neceſſity. This *Elihu* calls Gods hiding of our pride. Straights will take away the bubbling and pride of a wretch, and force him to an humbleneſſe: yea, they will hold downe the ſpirit to a patience and bearing long, ſo that the Lord may take leaſure to doe that which a free heart and jolly, in ſinne could not attend unto: before a Sermon of an houre long was irkeſome: Now with *Saul* (at Damaſcus gates) it takes law, and ſaith, what wilt thou have me to doe? Fiftly, it bores an eare into the ſoule which before had none, it pierces the heart, and makes it apt to heare, yea ſwift: tractable, and teachable, ſaying, ſpeake Lord for thy ſervant heares. Sixtly, it provokes diligence, painefullneſſe and unweariedneſſe in uſing of meanes. As Ninivee under *Ionas* arreſt: which before lay in a bed of eaſe, ſloth and ſottiſh careleſneſſe. Seventhly, it makes the heart glad of any one word of hope, poſſibility of remedy, and promiſe of mercy. Eightly, it breakes the heart, and melts it, to heare that the Lord will encline toward it, being ſo low brought as it is. Ninthly, it cauſes a marveilous eſteeme of mercy: ſets a wonderfull terrible hiew upon ſinne, and a precious marke upon forgiveneſſe: cauſes the ſoule to forget all her vanities & former objects in reſpect of that ſhe would have. Oh! *Naamans* diſeaſe ſeemed now hideous, a cure precious, all his honour and favour at home is forgotten for the time. Tenthly, it cauſes the ſoule to be glad of remedy from whomſoever, be he never ſo baſe, mean, and deſpiſed, yet he ſhall be precious who can heale him: he will not ſtarve for lacke of plate or ſilver to eat or drinke out of, but he will ſtoop to any Phyſitian, as *Naaman* here did. And to conclude he is now meet to accept of a remedy upon the termes of his Phyſitian (which though *Naaman* was not yet, becauſe not tawed throughly) yet he is in preparation to it. He is content upon any conditions to have eaſe, to renounce his owne mony and price as *Naaman*, to accept it of free gift, to be as bare and beggarly as if he had not one braſſe farthing: and to make his beſt requitall, to be only this; a free acknowledgement of the meere, naked, entire, and ſuperabundant bounty of love and good will in him who cured him. I ſay when a man is throughly begirt, and put to it, the Lord workes thus by it, as by this example.

Reaſon 4.

Reaſon 5.

Reaſon 6.

Reaſon 7.

Reaſon 8.

Reaſon 9.

Reaſon 10.

Reaſon 11.

I confeſſe, where the ſoule is but in halfe a diſtreſſe, or in a ſtraight without God attending it with the ſpirit of grace, there is no other worke effected ſave violent and conſtrained which comes to nothing; for the ſoule under a preſſure, is like a man on the racke, who to avoide the paine, will ſay any thing, though it be a lye. But when the feare is over, then they returne to their old byas againe. Examples whereof we have of all ſorts, *Pharoah* by name, and the Iſraelites. For the former, during thoſe ten plagues oppreſſing him and his people, what promiſes would he not make? how did he tremble and ſend for *Moſes*, and reſolve to diſmiſſe Iſrael? but no ſooner was he at liberty, but he hardned his heart worſe, and would not ſuffer them to goe. Touching the latter, the booke of Judges,

Exception. Straights make hypocrites but to counterfeit while they are on the racke.

Exod. 6. 7 8 9. cap.

2 Kings

Judge 10. end with 11.1.&c.

Simile.

Explication of the point.

Judges, is a ſufficient witneſſe : while they were under cruell Lords who vexed them, how importunate were they, time after time to be delivered? what humiliations did they profeſſe, and ſhewes of repentance (and no doubt ſelfe meant as it ſpake, but the heart being ſtill it ſelfe, deceived it ſelfe, and mocked God) and being rid of the ſtraight, became worſe Idolaters then before. Oh what will not the deepe deceitfull heart pretend for her owne ends ! They ſay the Fox being in a ſnare will gnaw off her leg to quit her ſelfe of the perill, and goe upon three legges : ſo the vile heart will doe any thing for the preſent, that ſo after ſhe may enjoy her ſelfe either wholly or in part. But if the Lord himſelfe make the yoke of ſet purpoſe to catch a wilde wretched ſinner and ſtop him in his courſe that he might turne him home : not only the ſtraight, but the word alſo ſhall worke upon conſcience, aſwell as the outward man, and whatſoever the lets are, as ſubtilty, pride, rebellion, the Lord will conquer and ſubdue them to the obedience of faith.

To open this a little, conceive it thus. It is with the ſpirituall man enlightned, as with the carnall. A corrupt appetite alway ſeekes to it ſelfe ſome object of falſe happineſſe. Some compting knowledge to bee an happineſſe, ſeeke that, others honor and preferment, others their eaſe and welfare, others jollity and the pride of life, others reputation and name among men, others long life and proſperity. If they attaine their deſires, they are pitcht, as they would be, and enjoy happineſſe in their attainements. But if God croſſe them of their intents; as for example, if he deny the firſt capacity and ability of parts to compaſſe his aimes ; if he defeat another, by denying them promotion, and preferring others ; if he croſſe a third with the loſſe of health, and perfect ſences, that he taſtes no pleaſure in his games and paſtimes, or old age removes him for them : if a fourth bee followed with the diſdaine and ill opinion of the multitude: if a fifth be afflicted with diſeaſes, and be in perill of death : alas ! what is their life worth? being robbed of their whelpes, their life is but weariſome, they are at a ſet, joyleſſe, and out of heart. As a mizer having loſt his treaſure, or an ambitious favorit out of his Princes favor, are like *Nabals*, their hearts dye like a ſtone in them. Onely by this they can helpe themſelves, that as it was their miſery to chuſe ſuch baſe objects ; ſo it is their ſubtilty, when they are defeated of the one, they turne to another. As if learning faile, then runne to preferment; if that faile, to eaſe, to pleaſure, to mony, or the like, and all becauſe the ſoule loaths a ſtraight : So is it with him who is enlightned and convinced in conſcience. When once the Lord by his law or terrors, convicts a man, that although he attaine whatſoever his heart deſires, yet he hath gotten but a fading Paradiſe, hee hath no more then an hel-hound may have : he hath nothing which can quiet the appetite of the ſoule which is immortall: I ſay, when ſuch a light comes into the ſoule, telling him the miſery of all he hath, and the happineſſe of a man that hath that which he wants, Chriſt and pardon, grace & heaven: how can it be, but ſuch a man lying thus convinced, muſt needs be as a man ſtabd & ſlaine, bereft of all his fooles Paradiſe at once? But if ſuch anone hearing of a better happineſſe, will play the hypocrite, diſſemble a kinde of religion, make himſelfe demure and holy, preciſe and zealous in the worſhip of God, and yet ſtill hold his former erronious happineſſe, coloured

coſoured over with ſome devotion, deſtitute of any better principle to ſettle upon, what is this, but to get out of his preſſure by a falſe indirect way, and ſo deprive himſelfe of the true end of his conviction, which is to caſt out his old principle, and bottome himſelfe upon an new? But to what tends all this? The ſumme of all is, that a ſtraight and preſſure when the Lord is the maker of it and the holder of it on: is a ſpeciall meanes to pul down the heart before God, & to force it to ſeek conditions of peace, upon Gods owne termes (be they never ſo difficult) and that to avoide a greater incombrance. For why? The Lord is able by this meane not only to ſubdue corrupt ſelfe by his law, but alſo religious ſelfe, erronious and deluded ſelfe by his Goſpell: and ſo to tranſlate the ſoule meerely from a falſe bottome to a ſound, whatſoever it coſt him. But where the Lord and the Spirit of the Word attends not ſuch ſtraights, although in an extremity, the heart is beſet and ſtraighted, yet afterward it will ſlip the collar: and in the meane time, will uſe all trickes and ſhifts (as the poore creature hard hunted, and in danger) to avoide the trouble, yea it will turne it ſelfe into a thouſand guiſes and devices, rather then leave her old trade, and cleave to a promiſe.

I come to the uſe. And firſt it might be inſtruction and admonition to ſuch of us, as goe for the forwardeſt Chriſtians. Inſtruction firſt to teach us to adore the wiſedome of our God in the adminiſtration of the times in which we live in. The word ſeemes to have done working upon the conſciences of the moſt, few are gaſtred by the terrors thereof, few ſuſtained by the promiſes, few are ſenſible active watchfull walkers. I doubt not but God hath his jewells in corners, his ſecret ones, whoſe hearts and waies lye cloſe to him, in theſe degenerate times. But for the body of hearers, either to bee converted or (in appearance) converted already, ſtrange it is what a numbe palſey, what a Laodicean temper of indifference, eaſe, and ſelfe-love hath covered us over: ſcarce one in a long time gaſtred out of his neaſt of forme or profaneneſſe: and ſuch as are, keepe their conſciences at ſuch looſe termes, that few can diſcerne them to be under the Banner or authority of any Soveraigne. Now what doth the Lord? Surely he is faine to lay men upon the bayard, and to afflict them with one yoke or other, either perſonall or generall ſtraights. Selfe-love hath over-growne all, that except God ſtept out of his ordinary path of ſpeaking, to doing, and did cauſe each face to waxe pale, and each hand to be on the pained plat: ſome by poverty, others by debt, or impriſonment, or loſſes, or reproach, or purſuite of enemies, malicious tongues, unreaſonable men, deſperate unfaithfulneſſe, treachery and injuriouſneſſe of ſuch as they live with: Sure it is, the word would worke but little upon us. Even the wiſe Virgines are all fallen aſleep, with the reſt. How ſhould the Lord ſearch us, what conſcience, truth and ſincerity lyes at the bottome? Surely now, if ever, we ſhould rouze our ſelves and ſay, the Philiſtins are upon thee *Samſon*, Judges 16.22. When the power and pureneſſe of worſhip, when the ſubſtance and matter of religion growes queſtioned, when men teach, profeſſe and walke ſo, as if any profeſſion would ſerve their turne: yea, many ſuch as have ſeemed moſt zealous, ſincere, and faithfull, waxe cold, maintainers of diſorder in their places, live in contention and jealouſie with the beſt, plucke in their former hornes of forwardneſſe:

Uſe 1. of Inſtruct.

Matth. 25.

2 Kings

forwardneſſe: others play the Time-ſervers and leave God to ſhift for himſelfe, ſaying, now ſee to thine owne houſe *David*: Is it not time for the Lord to come with his ſharpe triall among us to ſearch what is in us? To gaſter the conſciences of ſome who were never awakened, by ſome outward ſtraights; hardneſſe to live, banqueruptneſſe and ruine of eſtate, beggery and miſery: others by ſearching trialls and extremities, that either they muſt carry their lives and ſtates, gifts and hopes in their boſomes ready to let out, or elſe they muſt proſtitute their conſciences to ſinne and treachery? yes ſurely: or elſe he knowes (if we might be let alone) we would grow to the formality, ſoftneſſe, ſecurity, commons and fulſomeneſſe of others who have no ſparke of grace in them. But now perhaps being ſearcht to the quicke, and put to it, we dare not for ſhame lay our names at the ſtake of perpetuall reproach, by giving God quite over: now perhaps, we will ſhake our ſelves and ſay, ſhall ſuch an one as I betray God? ſhall I pollute his worſhip? ſhall I defile that truth which I have received incorrupt from others? ſhall I helpe to deſtroy Gods lawe, deface the power of goodneſſe? ſort my ſelfe with ſuch as are enemies, ſeparate my ſelfe from my brethren? No ſure: I wiſh I had looked to it ſooner; yet better late then never: At laſt I will give witneſſe to God to his truth, honor, ſervants, Sabbaths: I will no longer give aime to the religion of theſe times, their ſapleſſe, dead and powerleſſe profeſſion: my ſoule loathes it: I long to reprove and confute all Popiſh, Pelagian, ſuperſtitious, and formall religion: and therefore let parts, let eaſe, let liberty, preferment, honor, gifts, outward proſperity goe where they will, my darling I will not loſe, I will not bite off that precious ſtone (for which I am hunted) and caſt it to the hounds, to ſave my life: But I am reſolved (through mercy) to my uttermoſt to juſtifie the power of truth, both in my judgement and practice. Oh it is the wiſedome of God to ſend ſuch ſtraights and ſnares among us, for the diſcovery of hypocrites and baſe counterfeits! and for the exerciſe of that ſecret grace in his owne which elſe through eaſe and ſelfe-love would ruſt and cankerfret.

Vſe 2. Admonition. Lay to heart the little humiliation of the land under publique ſtraights.

Secondly, let it teach us to lay it ſadly to heart, that God is ſo croſſed of his purpoſe both in generall and ſpeciall by ſuch as abuſe his judgements and terrors in the world. I will more ſparily touch forraine nations and Churches, French, Dutch, or other: yet let it not paſſe us without notice, that after all theſe hurliburlies and havocks of warre, of perſecution, of famines, peſtilences, and ſuch miſeries (as ſcarce in any age have beene heard of) the hearts of thoſe nations remaine ſtill as ſecure, profane, contemptuous of God, blaſphemous, drunken, contentious (yea in the midſt of their late victories) ſo regardleſſe of Gods honor, either in abandoning Papiſts and Popery, or in ſetling power and purity of worſhip, but ſtill as deſperate, the Miniſtery as ſapleſſe, and the people as fruitleſſe as ever! Oh how juſt were it with God for theſe evills, to turne the wheele backe! and to ſuffer Papiſts and hereſie to encroach againe, and make their ſecond bondage as much deeper then the former, as the loines are greater then the little fingers, yea as their latter evills and abuſe of Gods providence have exceeded the former! But to leave them and come to our ſelves, how doe we at home generally beare off all Gods ſtraights and preſſures with head and ſhoulders? No man laying to heart any thing:

but

but as *Eſay* 64. ſaith, No man ſeekes after the Lord, nor ſtirres up himſelfe to lay hold upon him: All lick themſelves whole with falſe tongues, every man taking thought how to ſave one, none underſtanding the Lord in his way, what he ſhould meane by his waſting us by plagues, conſuming our people with poverty, deſtroying our ſoules with cleanneſſe of teeth, depriving us of the lives and labours, and worthy ſervices of ſo many Miniſters, Nobles, Warriours, good Governours, and Chriſtian profeſſors of his truth; few conſider the ſcope of God in theſe differences that are between Prince and Subject, Subject and Subject: Complaints are in all mens mouthes, ſorrowes upon all ſtates: But whereas the Lords ſcope is hereby rather to unite all the Nation againſt the common adverſary, to draw all to an holy conſent in ſeeking mercie for the Church, and agreement between divided parties, that by a generall humiliation, and preparing to meet the Lord, we might prevent ruine: Alas! when was there more powring out of our hearts to ſenſuality, eaſe, Sabbath-breaking, luſts, exceſſe of pleaſures, riot, gaming, and ſtretching of our ſelves upon beds of Ivory, that the clamours of the oppreſſed, the afflicted people of God might not be taken to heart, or regarded? Who conſiders how the hearts of the fathers have been eſtranged from the children, and the childrens from them? who trembles at it, and feares leſt by a common enemy the Lord ſhould ſmite the earth with curſing? who hath humbled his ſoule under our moth-eatings, and ſeekes to prevent the Lions tearing of us in peeces? But all of us abhorre to acknowledge any preſſures, pleaſe our ſelves with ſuch contents as we enjoy in private, that we might oppreſſe ſenſe and conſcience: Hee that could bring us newes of all well, hopes of good, welfare and proſperity, ſhould bee a welcome man to us: but as for ſadder times, to ſearch the ſound from the hollow, we are loath to heare of them, becauſe wee are loath to prepare for them. The effects of thoſe things cannot pleaſe us, the cauſes whereof we are loath to beſtow the coſt to remove. In the meane time how is the Lord fruſtrate of his expectation? for, hee pinches and yokes us, that hee might heare of us, that our beloved, pretious luſts might bee divorced from us. We pray and faſt, but the Lord tels us, wee cannot ſpeed, becauſe we ſtill keep a breadth in his narrow, and in our afflictions are light-hearted: our hearts are not broke enough, our ſpeciall luſts wee have pleaſure in, when heaven is falling upon our heads: wee can beleeve nothing ere we feele it, leſt it ſhould coſt us labour to caſt it out. Our Babyloniſh garment, ſecret plague of heart, pretious ſin, wee dare nouriſh in the midſt of all terrours and croſſes thundring about us. So mad wee are, that wee cry peace in the midſt of ill tidings, ruines of other Churches, troubles in our owne, dearth, unſeaſonable weather, loſſes of our eſtate, and evils both ſuffered and feared. Surely God hath us down now: common ſtuffe will not ſerve us.

Eſay 64.6.7.

Malac. 4.

Eſay 58.5.6.

Joel 2.12.

I might ſpeak as much of our abuſing of perſonall ſtreights. How many of us are privie in our places and dwellings to ſundry who in the extremities of horrour, and guilt of conſcience upon their ſick beds, have ſent for the Miniſter (whom they have ſcorned before) and there vomited up all their gorge, accuſed and condemned themſelves for their pride, malice, drunkenneſſe, contempt of religion? have ſhed ſalt teares in abundance,

The like complaint in reſpect of perſonall preſſures.

2 Kings

wrung the Minister by the hands, cried him mercie for all wrongs, covenanted and taken witnesse (if they lived) they would be new men? They have been neare to death, and had reconciliation offered them: But no sooner hath the hiew and cry been over, but they have returned to their vomit, their bowing like Bull-rushes hath turned to stand bolt upright, and they have growne more base and wicked after, then before, As *Ieroboam* while his dried hand lasted, was tame and penitent: but when restored, fell to his Idols double and treble? What? was there not such a deep pressure upon them, as spent and consumed their flesh and marrow, and brought them to the graves brinke? Yes. But yet it was not deep enough, it pierced not to the inner man, the heart was the old one still: (so that wee Ministers had not need to bee over confident of them:) for if that had been pierced, then the thoughts of their heart, the affections and lusts had been galled and purged. As the Philosopher being beaten with Clubs, said: You beat my Tun (meaning his skin and flesh) but you beat not me: so may these say to God, Thou layest me upon my bed, breakest my bones, takest away my stomack, abasest & humblest my flesh, and terrifiest my sense; but my heart is whole, my stoutnesse, unbelief, hollownesse and prophanenesse remaine, my soul was never slayted! who would ever have thought it? Surely if the Lord then mean thee good, hee must put more drammes and drugges into the Physicke, else they will never worke. Take heed: *Ieroboam* had a command first, that hee broke; then a Prophet, him he scorned; then a threat, that he out-grew, and at last was left so hardened, that meanes ceased, because God meant to destroy him. Beware this be not your lot.

1 King 13.6.7

Men not to be trusted on their sicke beds.

Note.

Vse 3. Wonder not that men so little joy in hearing of streights.

Thirdly, this should teach us not to wonder that men are so loath to take any notice of streights, either generall or personall. Surely they see that they are searching, humbling, taming things, sent to pull the heart low, and lay it open before God: this they flye from, as *Moses* from a serpent: therefore, as *Pharaoh* by his Sorcerers, and *Ieroboam* by the death of the Prophet, hardned themselves against the streights that befell them; so do these, with fool-hardy courage, flye against the returning waters, lest they should be stopt in their course. All the wits that men have, are (mostly) spent upon these two objects, either dispensing with the strictnesse of commands: Or when judgements come, avoiding the dint and pressure of them. Men shuffle them off thus: either they concerne not themselves, or they befell by chance, or may be bought off with money, or shunned by policie, or worne out with time, or lessened by comparison: But to take note thereof, to lay sin to heart, and repent of it, they are utterly opposite to it. *David* was not more resolved to lye in his filth, and when *Vriahs* death was told him, hee did not more equivocate with his conscience, (saying, Tush, the sword kills all sorts, whats his death to me?) then these professe to goe on blind-folded with sweet inchantments, or fool-hardily with rebellion, and, to give no way at all to divine yokes, and pressures to pinch them. What argues this, but a desperate heart to fight it out with God, with him that said, This comes from the Lord? shall I attend him any longer? Such a cursed hard heart doth but keep all to the last, heaping up wrath, and when long-suffering hath spent it selfe in pulling them to repentance, then shall they bee left to conflict nakedly

Mens shifts against their streights.

1 Sam. 13.

1 King 7. end.

kedly with hell and vengeance, till it carry them away quicke, and there be none to deliver! Oh! be admoniſhed, take note in ſeaſon, rather, of Gods meaning, and fight not againſt God? What? doe yee thinke that God hampers you either by word, or workes, to deſtroy you? If his meaning were ſo, he could doe it without warning. And as for ſhifting off Gods yokes, bee ſure of it, there is no counſell againſt him; if you balke him one way, he can match you ten wayes. Better ſtoop betimes, and come in freely: for he can make thy whole life a preſſure, fill thee with all adverſity, as *Oded* ſaith: If thou ſcape the Lion, the Beare ſhall meet thee; if both, a Serpent out of the wall ſhall bite thee. There is no ſtruggling.

Not reſiſting of God. 1. 2 King. 16.

And beſides, why ſhould a ſtreight ſo ſcare thee from God? hath it no power or uſe in it, to draw thee neerer God? will nothing ſerve thee ſave to hate him (for amends) whom thou haſt already hurt? Is not all for thy good, if thou be not a Bedlam? And mayſt thou not bleſſe God for a Little-eaſe, when the world could not hold thee, nor the earth beare thee for thy wildneſſe and inſatiableneſſe in ſin? Tell me, if God had not matched thee, who could? hadſt thou not been damned? Shall then the remedy bee worſe then the diſeaſe? wilt thou breake all chaines, withs and ropes, like *Samſon*? cannot a priſon hold thee when all is done? Oh (if not before) yet at the laſt, when God hath thee there, grinding like an Aſſe, look up and ſay, I will return to my father. Or thinkeſt thou that thou ſhalt not profit by it? Remember, it is a marke of a reprobate, not to profite by the laſt medicine! Oh! there is abundant gaine in a croſſe and ſtreight. Beleeve the doctrine, and apply thy ſelfe to it, ſue to God for an heart to concurre with him in it, and thou ſhalt finde a ſtreight to be more wholeſome for thee, then to have thy will! Heathens could ſay ſo, and art thou a Divell to deny it? One of them (a deep obſerver of moralls and events) having knowne one to bee very licentious in life, and after comming to ſee him on his death-bed, writes thus of it to his friend: Yeſterday I underſtood (by viſiting ſuch a one) how much better wee are in ſickneſſe then in health: For, what ſicke man ſhall you ſee covetuous, or libidinous, or revengefull, or contentious? So that it were to be wiſhed, that we were ſuch in coole blood, and in health as in feare of death wee are forced to bee. So farre hee. So that wee ſhall need to conſult with no Scripture for the matter: But if we doe, we ſhall read, It is good for a man that he beare the yoke: and verſ. 22. even in chains and baniſhment, the Church confeſſeth, The compaſſions of the Lord are renewed every morning; which ſhe did ſcarcely ſee in liberty. I need name no more. Onely, let this be noted, That it is not wiſe for us, ſo ſtudiouſly to ſhun or ſhift off ſtreights, nor ſo eagerly to lay for eaſe and liberty to the fleſh; except wee would covet ſorrow, and avoid humiliation. Rather, lay together, what vantage thouſands have made thereof, both Prodigals before converſion, and Revolters after repentance: how the pride and jollity of the one in knowing no God (as *Nebuchadnezzar* and the Jaylor) hath beene turned into meekneſſe: and how the carnall ſenſuality of the other (as *David* being driven away by *Abſolom*, and *Samſon* in priſon) hath been corrected and changed to ſobriety and watchfulneſſe.

Streights cannot bee well wanted.

Lam. 3. 27.

Shunne not ſtreights.

2 Kings

Vse 4 Exhortation Looke up to God for a ſanctified uſe of all ſtraits.

Laſtly, let this exhort all who would be truly happy, to looke up to God the maker of yokes, the eaſer of yokes, and the ſanctifier thereof, that he would concurre with them, in giving them a kindly worke and iſſue upon our ſoules. Alas! ſtraits and extremities are no reall ſubſtance of goodneſſe, but only preparatives, and accidentalls, occaſioning the worke. The effect of grace reſteth in the pleaſure of him that ſends them: if, with an heart of mercy, they ſhall not ceaſe till they have left the ſoule under the authority of grace: if not, they ſhall onely make it inexcuſable in the day of deſtruction. Reſt not then in this, (which many reſt in) that they feele an awed, fearefull heart, checking and taming them, from old ventrouſneſſe, and ſawcineſſe againſt God: This is a great change, but not the change which they muſt looke after. For as a Maſter, doth as truly loath a baſe ſlave, as a ſawcy fellow, to be his ſervant, preferring a lowly and chearefull ſubjection before both extreames, ſo doth the Lord: he loaths both the bold & the ſervile ſpirit. If *Naaman* had reſted in this, his crouching at the Prophets gate, under the diſeaſe he felt, he had never been cured: and yet, even this was one ſtep to pull downe his ſtomacke. We ſee that when hee was put to it in the next verſe, he raged, (as baſe as he ſeemed here.) A Lion is a Lion ſtill, both couchant, and rampant. But if a Lion were made a lambe, it ſhould be a Lion no more. Religion ſtands in no forreigne violence, or pangs and acts of compulſion: but in inward habits and principles. Every violent thing doth but watch her time to bee ſet at liberty: as a priſoner to finde the doores open, and to file his chaine off. Why? Becauſe he was, where he would not be: and ſeekes to be where his delight is. A proud, carnall heart, vaine, and loving ſenſuall objects, may be held from them a time: and for the while (in ſome reſpects) thinke its well that its free from the tyranny of ſome luſts, for the noyſomeneſſe ſake: But when it can have liberty to them, and be let out to old objects of vanity, pride, and ſenſuality, it prefers it rather, becauſe the conſtitution of it is naturally ſo: I ſay therefore, reſt not in ſuch an eſtate. Conſider how endleſſe it is to ſtrive with a body of evill, by a few pangs of actuall diſtaſte, and violent reſtraint? Thinke with thy ſelfe, how little thou haſt prevailed by all this courſe, and that it will be a work ever to do; till the Lord binde the ſoule to her good behaviour, by putting goodneſſe into it, and cauſing it to behave it ſelfe well: it is but as the damming up of a violent ſtreame, which will have her courſe. Be not too much diſmaid at the thought of a new change of thine heart: its at the firſt, a ſad object to the carnall heart; but the ſweetneſſe of it, at laſt, makes it welcome.

Not onely to awe and tame us.

The Lord begins with violence, but ends in ſweetneſſe: the ſpirit of grace working a principle of delight in the ſoule, by a milde and ſoftly drawing the will, freely to chooſe grace before corruption, even for the good and favour which it feels therein. As it was lately with a melancholy man upon his marriage: he was exceedingly dejected to thinke, that now hee had put himſelfe into a new frame which hee had not formerly knowne, and loſt the liberty of his ſingle eſtate, brought the charge of wife, children and family upon himſelf, whereof before he was free: ſo is it with the corrupt part when it judges of that eſtate which God pulles her to. But if God match that feare with the ſweetneſſe of union

But to work a change in the ſoule, and to turn it to God. The diſmall thoughts of a true change.

and

and marriage to himſelfe, and make his yoke eaſie, oh then! love maintaines the ſoule in grace with ſweet, and content. Beg then of the Lord, that thy preſſure may not be removed, till it have left the print of mercy behinde it, and brought thee, ſo under graces command, that thou maieſt wholly be the Lords. Princes arreſt their ſubjects, for ſome debts, fines, forfeits, or ſervices due to themſelves; which being paid, the party is at his owne liberty. But the Lord doth not ſo: hee arreſts not a man, to bring him upon his knees, to wring from him ſome tearmes of homage; but to ſubdue the whole man, and the principle of the minde, will and frame to himſelfe. Concurre with this end of good, and proſper. But, if it be thus, the effects will ſhew it: for then, not onely the ſtoutneſſe of the heart and the rebellion of it are held under by ſtrong hand for a time; but, the ſubtilty thereof is truly turned to ſimplicity, the eaſe, ſloth of it, into diligence; the indifferency of it, into earneſtneſſe, the wearieſomneſſe of it into reſtleſſeneſſe and diligence, the inconſtancy of it into ſtableneſſe, the acts and pangs of it into habits, and principles, the violence, into liberty and holy delight, to ſubmit it ſelfe both to the way of beleeving, and the fruite of ſubjection and deniall of it ſelfe, both in legall and evangelicall reſpects. And ſo much for this doctrine, ſo far as the ſcope of it will beare. I might enter into further matter, both to diſcover the infinite tricks of a falſe heart, to nouzle it ſelfe in a corrupt eſtate: and the trialls and waies, whereby the Lord ſets ſuch an heart at liberty; But I foreſee, that the points following, will better occaſion theſe things, and therefore, I onely make this doctrine a preparative to them

Effects of change will ſhew it.

Now I proceed to the ſecond doctrine out of theſe words. ***That Naaman comes and ſtands at the doore of Eliſha.*** And that is this, That whomſoever the Lord intends to bring home, and convert to himſelfe, he will order all meanes moſt ſweetly and agreeingly, to that purpoſe. We ſee, *Naaman* and his retinue brought to the doore of *Eliſha*: But how? ſurely by the providence of the ſame God, who had purpoſed his converſion, he is brought to the meanes, to waite and expect the ſeaſon of it. And all things (we ſee) fall out and concurre aptly, to it. Firſt *Naaman* is infected with a loathſome diſeaſe, that under the hope of curing that, hee might make an errand to the Prophet, whom he had not elſe viſited. Secondly, a maide muſt be taken and the Aramites muſt fight, and take her, place her with *Naamans* wife; the maide muſt know, and be able to report of *Eliſha*, to her miſtriſſe, *Naaman* muſt aſcribe credit to her; and all theſe muſt concurre that he might hearken after *Eliſha*. Thirdly, letters muſt be eroneouſly ſent to *Iehoram*, that *Eliſha* might thereby correct an errour, and turne him to himſelfe, which elſe had not bin. And laſtly, *Naaman* hearing of the Prophet, muſt forthwith repaire unto him, and not expect till *Eliſha* tend upon him, elſe he had miſſed of his cure. All theſe occurrents God moſt wiſely orders and rules for the ends he intended: ſo that the one could no more be defeated then the other; if any one had failed, the effect might have ceaſed.

Doct. Whom God meanes to convert, them he firſt prevents by occaſions, and means.

Paſſages of Gods preventionin Naamans caſe.

The like may be ſaid of the converſion of *Oneſimus*, who had plaid the thiefe to his Maſter *Philemon*: God meant he ſhould bee converted by *Pauls* Miniſtery. Lo, how doth the Lord order the meanes unto it? He doth not inſtill falſhood and flight into him, but he orders it: He over-

Proofes of the point. Epiſ. to Philem.

2 Kings

rules him in his journey, that hee might not peake aſide into this corner or that, but goe to *Paul*, and lighting upon him, might by ſome direct and ſeaſonable ſpeech from him, be turned from his falſhood to God. So in the caſe of *Cornelius*: The Lord meant to ſettle him (being a good Proſelite) in the faith of the Lord Jeſus. The inſtrument by whom, was *Peter*. How ſhould he know of him, or where to come by him? The Lord in a viſion intimates it to *Cornelius*, and he ſends to Joppe to *Simon*. But *Peter* was armed with a minde to reject their errand, becauſe he was a Jew, and *Cornelius* a Gentile. True: But, immediately before their comming, the Lord rectifies *Peter*, and frames him to goe by a viſion of all crawling vermin in a cleane ſheet, which *Peter* was bidden to eate: and, refuſing to doe ſo, was commanded not to eſteeme that uncleane, which the Lord had made cleane. No ſooner is *Peter* rectified, but they knock: and he is prepared to goe with them, comes, findes all ready, and converts *Cornelius*. To conclude, thus it is with the Eunuch of Candace: He paſſing by that way, where *Philip* preached, the Spirit prompts him to joyne himſelfe to that Charet. When he comes, he findes him reading in *Eſay* a peece of a Prophecie, cap. 53. concerning Chriſts generation: and, not knowing the ſenſe, askes *Philip*; who takes occaſion thereby to open to him the whole myſtery of Chriſt, and convinces him of the truth, whereupon he is converted. I heape up no more examples. Reade the paſſages of Acts 9. in *Saul*.

Acts 10.

Acts 8.

Acts 9.

Reaſons.

1.

There be many reaſons of the point. 1. As the Lord is the firſt mover of the vaſt frame of this world, and the maine changes of whole States, Churches and Kingdomes, their ſtableneſſe and proſperity, their decay and ruine, the great affaires of warre, peace, and government: ſo eſpecially, he ſits at the ſterne of his Church. If he meane to puniſh it, he acts and animates the wayes to bring it to paſſe, and the inſtruments of his wrath. Though the King of Aſhur, meant no other but to ſpoile and make wreck, yet God uſed him onely as his rod of vengeance. And, as he meant to ſcatter thoſe ten Tribes for their horrible idolatry: ſo he orders the whole frame of premiſes tending thereto: He divides the Kingdomes of *Reboboam* and *Ieroboam*. He ſuffers that ſnare of Diviſion to cut off the tenne Tribes from Juda, and her worſhip, Temple and ſacrifices: To deviſe an idolatrous worſhip of Calves. He plagues them with a ſucceſſion of 3 or 4 curſed families and their of-ſpring, *Ieroboam, Baaſha, Omri, Iehu*: and, after them, left them to a moſt deſperate government of Uſurpers, *Shallum* and the reſt, till the whole nation was carried away into perpetuall Captivity. And, when it pleaſed him to redeeme his Church, he alſo acted the ſpirits of thoſe inſtruments of deliverance, as, after the 70 yeares Captivity, he ſtirred up the ſpirit of *Darius*, *Aſſuerus*, *Cyrus*, and others, to begin and perfect his project. Nay, not onely ſo, but, there is no act concerning the welfare of his, but he orders it. He foreſeeing the family of *Iacob* muſt (els) periſh for food, long before layes to prevent it, in the antecedents of it: Suffers *Ioſeph* to dreame an odious dreame, his brethren to ſell him to *Putiphar*, his wife to attempt, accuſe, and impriſon him, the two priſoners to propound their dreames, and receive ſatisfaction, *Pharao* in the diſtreſſe of his ſpirit to heare of him in that reſpect, to conſult with, and reſolve himſelfe by him, to promote him to be chiefe in the Kingdome

Reade Eſay 10.7.

1 King. 12. 13

2 Chr. 36. 22. Ezra 1.2. Ezra 6.6.

Gen. 35.5. & 25. & Gen. 45.7. Gen. 41.14.

dome under him, cauſes *Ioſeph* to prepare and ſtore up corne, and ſo relieves *Iacob* and his ſons. All this whole frame hee himſelfe confeſſes to be from God; you (ſaith he) intended evill to me, but the Lord intended greater things, even to preſerve the lives of his Church. That great worke of Redemption by the Lord Jeſus had one main paſſage in it, That Chriſt must be borne at Bethlehem. *Mary* was now big, and dwelt at Nazaret. But, the Lord cauſes *Auguſtus Ceſar*, to taxe all the world, and to command all the Jewes to repaire to the City of their nativity and family. This charge being exact, poore *Mary* muſt carry her bigge body thither: and, there travaile of Chriſt. Nothing could hinder. *Saul* muſt be the King, whom in wrath, God appoints over diſcontented Iſrael: To this end, the Aſſes muſt goe aſtray, he muſt ſeeke them, be in a ſtrait, goe to *Samuel*, and he warned of God, muſt meet him, there *Saul* receives the meſſage, and is anointed. Now marke, the reaſon: If the Lord be thus in all thoſe events which concerne his Church in the generall, and the externall onely, how much more ſhall he appeare, to bee active in the moſt excellent part of all other, *viz.* his drawing home all ſuch to himſelfe as belong to his Election? Surely as the act is the moſt eminent peece of all other Providence, ſo God his activeneſſe, and powerfull concurrence thereto, (in ſwaying all premiſes to inferre the concluſion of his Purpoſe) muſt be moſt eminently ſeene in that above all others.

Luke 2. 1.

1 Sam 9. 2. & 19.

Secondly, if the effecting of the ſubſtance of their converſion whom he hath elected, muſt flow from his grace and power, then much more the accommodating of all ſuch antecedents as conduce thereto, muſt be from his direction. But ſo it is, the ſubſtance of the meanes is from him, he calls home all whom he hath elected, *Rom.* 8. The enlightning of them by the word, the humbling, the breaking of heart, the perſwading of them to beleeve is from him. How much more the ordering and preparing of circumſtances, according of occaſions, accidents, times, perſons, and the like, muſt alſo be aſcribed to his moſt divine diſpenſation?

Reaſon 2.

Thirdly, if the Lord ſhould leave his owne ends at randon, to be ordered by the will and arbitrement of inſtruments occaſions, left to their owne pleaſure and choice: then ſhould the infallible purpoſe of God, hang upon the mutable and caſuall actions of ſuch inſtruments, and the raſh concourſe of liveleſſe occaſions, which cannot act or bring together themſelves, to produce any ſuch effect. And by conſequent ſuch effects ſhould faile. Which becauſe it is impoſſible, therefore of neceſſity muſt both be ſubject to the over-ruling power of the Purpoſer: determining ſome, and conjoyning others, wills I meane of men, or accidentall occaſions, to the infallible effecting of the converſion of ſuch as hee hath choſen.

Reaſon 3.

Fourthly, we know, the end being once ſet downe in the minde, ordereth and directeth the whole frame of thoſe things which make toward it: if a man have propounded to himſelfe a purpoſe to marry, to build, to travell: the Idea of theſe ends ſtill enliveth the obſervation of all occaſions, and opportunities, which a man meets with, and draweth all, to the attainment of ſuch ends. Where ſuch ends are not propoſed, the minde is quiet, and ordereth no occaſions tending that way. Thus it is with the Lord: The end once being determined, that ſtirreth, and ordereth

Reaſon 4.

2 Kings

reth his wisedome and providence, to fore-lay all meanes, which tend thereto; I meane the conversion of the poore soule. I do not make Gods and mans intentions like, in all points, but illustrate the one by the other. The difference between them is large: for first, mens ends are before their enterprises, and they are successive also, here one meane offers it selfe to promote their end, there another. Not so in the Lord, who perfectly and at once (though orderly) doth both determine his ends, and contrive his meanes, and beholds the effecting of the one in the other, necessarily and unfallibly: Gods meanes never faile him in his projects, whereas man for lacke of sufficient fore-cast and provision, is disappointed farre oftner then he succeeds. Men may so concurre to their owne ends, in their preparations, as to use sinfull instruments sinfully, partaking with them in their evils: But the Lord, although he oft use sinfull occasions and accidents, and instruments to compasse his ends, yet hee concurres not to their sinne, but onely disposeth and over-ruleth it to good: As the Lord used *Ieroboam* and *Iehu's* ambitious desires to effect the overthrow of the houses of *Rehoboam* and *Ahab*. So he used the sinne of *Saul* to bee an occasion of his deeper humiliation; and the sinne of the Jewes, *Acts* 2. who murthered the Lord of life, to prick and break their hearts the more easily by *Peters* Sermon. So the Jaylors desperatenesse, cruelty and rage against the Apostles, to convince him the more, deeply convincing him afterwards. So much for reasons.

Gods fore-sight & mans differ much.

1 Kings 13. Acts 9.1.

Acts 2.39. Acts 18.

Quest. But here a question may be asked, In what sort the Lord may bee said to act, and accord all meanes which may serve to compasse his end in this kinde?

Answ. I answer: It is hard to set downe the variety of wayes by which the Lord worketh: yet some few of the most usuall I may mention. First and especially this: That the Lord over-rules, and diverts, and alters the intentions of men, that whenas they intend one thing, hee intends another, either crossing their owne, to effect his, or wrapping in theirs within his owne, as most prevailing and chiefe. Thus did the Lord here in *Naamans* case. He dreamt of nothing lesse then any cure of soule: yet the Lord intends it as chiefe, and casts him in the other as an over-plus. Thus *Paul* discoursing of his conversion to *Agrippa*, Acts 26. tells him hee was going like a Pursivant with a Bouget of Letters to Damascus, to apprehend the Saints there: But the Lord (who had separated him to a farre other end, even to be a chosen vessell of grace, and an Apostle to carry his Name to the Gentiles) cast him downe from his Palfrey, smote him to the ground, and amazed him, till hee had throughly subdued him under his owne will and government. Herein shewing himselfe to bee as *Paul*, Eph. 3. calles him, the Father of all the families of the Earth. For as the Master of a family over-rules his servants will and businesse; and, when he intends one worke in an ordinary course of service, his Master hath some other businesse of greater consequence to send him about, and so the servant is acted by his master to forbeare the one, and dispatch the other; so is it here in the great worke of salvation. Many a man useth to make an ordinary worke of going to a place where the Word is preached: hee aimes at businesse, or company, or novelties, or perhaps cavilling at the Minister: The Lord aimes at fetching him within his net, that hee may divert

Gods preventions wherein they stand, and in what particulars.

The first branch.

God over-rules, diverts our intents to serve his.

Acts 26.

Epes. 3.15.

vert his purpoſe, and draw him to converſion. Not onely as *Eſay* ſaith Cap. 65.1. The Lord is found of ſuch as ſought him not: that is prevents the thoughts which were roving helward, worldward, and ſinward, to thinke of matters of greater conſequence, even heaven and happineſſe: But (which is more) when they perhaps purpoſed to croſſe with God (as *Paul* did) the Lords intents overrule mans, and turne him the way which himſelfe intends. As old *Eli*, overrules *Samuels* ſeelineſſe, and ſaith, if he call againe, ſay, ſpeake, for thy ſervant heareth.

2 Kings

Job 33.
Eſay 65.1.

Secondly, the Lord where he meanes to convert, will mightily overpower the ſoule from ſtumbling at ſuch diſcouragements, and obſtacles that ſtand in the way. This argues God ſpecially preſent, and to have a finger in the worke. When another ſhall be a divell to himſelfe, to diſſwade himſelfe from God by caſting the difficulties, alleadging farmes, oxen and wife to hold him off: and, by framing to himſelfe many Lions in the way, ſo that if he goes, yet it is as a Beare to the ſtake, to heare the word, if he heares once, he neglects oft: lo, when God ſtirs his heart, he ſhall feel ſuch a ſtrong, perpetuall moover within him; that theſe are nothing, with him, he beats them off as flies, he feeles ſuch a fire of purpoſe, and bent in his heart, to ſeeke after God, as if he thought, ſome pearle were there to be had: he cannot finde in his heart, to leave off hearing, praying, muſing, queſtioning, and uſing all helpes, which are in his power, till he have felt the worke of them, in himſelfe. *Naaman* heere had his diſmaiments: yet the Lord by a ſecret hand of his owne, held him on, aſſwaged his rage, and ſet his ſervants on worke, till he had effected the cure. When the Lord had *Paul* on the hooke once, he ſuffered him not to ſlug out the worke, till he had finiſhed it. Act. 9.

2. Branch. Overpowers the ſoule from ſtumbling at diſcouragements.

Gal. 1.17
Act. 9

Thirdly, the Lord diſpoſes of all outward occaſions, which lead to his ends and both remooves the oppoſites, and accomodates, unites and chaines together the meanes, that the end be not fruſtrated. Notable is that I noted Act. 10. of *Peter*, who was no way like to goe with the ſervants to *Cornelius*, as being an heathen: what doth the Lord? workes *Peters* heart from that objection, and ſo from unwillingneſſe: nay, more, he doth make the one privy to the others want, and, as in a viſion, *Paul* ſaw *Ananias* comming toward him, to open his eies, ſo on the other ſide *Ananias* in a viſion, is informed of *Pauls* praying, and waiting upon the Lord for remedy. God brings both together, and ſutes the one with willingneſſe to be holpen, and the other with readineſſe to helpe: & ſo, they were mutually fitted to do and receive good, each to, and from other. So in *Pauls* caſe when he was to go to *Ananias*, how unwilling was he to be the inſtrument of ſettling & ſatisfying him? Therefore the Lord ſteps in, and remooves that let, and tells him, he is a ſpeciall man for his own uſe.

3. Branch He diſpoſes of all outward occaſions, both remooving them which let, and framing them which helpe.

So oftimes when parents, friends, Miniſter himſelfe are diſcouragements to a poore novice; how doth the Lord (foreſeeing ſuch a blur) turne the eies of Crocodiles, to Doves eyes, alleniate, and draw the hearts of fathers to the children? what faire way doth he open? Againe, how doth the Lord diſpoſe of ſuch requiſite circumſtances as concurre to the ends, without which, it could not have been effected? Sometime by bringing a man into ſuch a place, or Towne, where a faithfull Miniſtry reſideth, ſometimes into ſome ſuch family, where the name of God

is

2 Kings

John 4.

is called upon faithfully, ſometime preparing for a man ſuch a dwelling as is compaſſed about with good neighbours, whoſe example and helpe may be a loadſtone unto him, as the woman of Samaria (being her ſelfe firſt drawne from her ſcoffing to beleeving) drew all her kindred: So oftentimes the Lord by ſhaking one maine Pillar-ſtone in an houſe, cauſes many little ſtones to rattle downe after. So many a young Scholler by a godly Tutor, many a young youth or maid by a religious Maſter or Miſtreſſe, many an ignorant novice, by marrying a good wife or husband, and, into a godly family, growes to be religious. All theſe are gracious preventions. And from the ſame preventing mercy it is, that the Chaine and Coherence of the meanes, one after another, is ſo united and ſo continued by the Lord, that whereas the breaking off of any one, might ſplit and marre the frame; the Lord holds all together, for the effecting thereof. As here, except all the foure premiſes had held, *Naaman* might have beene eaſily defeated of his iſſue. But the Lord ſuffers no one linke of the chaine to breake.

4. Branch. Accommodates all circumſtances fitly to the end.

Fourthly, the Lord moſt aptly and fitly accommodates all circumſtances by his providence, to conſort and combine to ſuch ends: diſpoſing of apt condition, age, ſeaſon, perſon, place and other opportunities. If *Naaman* (being ſo great) had not beene made little by the condition of a leper, could he have ſtooped ſo low as the Prophet? All are not ſo fit to bee dealt with, by every inſtrument: ſome, more are drawne by a ſtill and ſoftly voice, others by the thundring of terror: the Lord ſuits meet perſons to meet objects, that ſo the worke might goe forward. Not alway the ſame perſon, is apt to bee wrought upon, by all occaſions: As when the minde is filled with buſineſſe, all that is ſpoken, is as it were ſpoken in a mans caſt. *Martha*, being cumbred with much ſerving, was as a full veſſell, for the time, all which had beene put into her had run over: Therefore *Mary*, whoſe minde was free and empty, was fitter to ſit at Chriſts feet, and profit. All places are not alike, to all ſorts: While children live under their Parents wing, at eaſe and liberty, they minde nothing, that good is: perhaps, being abroad, and being put to it, marked, and noted in their converſation and behaviour, ſeeing that the world is hard, and living under ſtrict government; they begin to looke about them, and to digeſt thoſe counſells, which they have long beene taught. Every age is not ſo capable: when yeares have hardened a man in his evill courſe, he is farre worſe to be wrought upon, then in his younger time, having leſſe experience of evill. So that the Lord takes men in the fitteſt ſeaſon, in youth, and prevents the unfitteſt, and ſo for all other circumſtances.

Luke 10.40.

5. Branch. Prevents ſuch evills, as might hinder his ends.

Fifthly, the Lord mercifully ſtops and prevents ſuch accidents, as (if they tooke effect) would be like to hinder the worke of his providence. Thus, the Lord prevents an ill marriage, an unapt yoke-fellow, when, as yet there was far more likelihood that way, then any other. Yet the Lord croſſes and defeats it, ſo that it ſhall not take effect: ſo alſo he ſtops and cuts off ſome ſuch companion by death, either friend, or husband, or wife, or the like, whoſe example or counſell, might poſſibly have hindred the good of the other party. *Abigail* being freed from *Nabal*, was at liberty for *David*: and ſo, many a well-minded childe, over-ruled by a croſſe and peeviſh father or mother, when God removes that tye, is at more

1 Sam.25.

more liberty to enjoy the meanes, and to profite. So that, the Lord when he intends any thing, doth alway remove out of his way the lets which might hinder his worke.

Laſtly and eſpecially, the Lord doth put life, ſucceſſe and bleſſing into all ſuch courſes, and meanes, from firſt to laſt, as are offered by his providence, that they ſhall take effect, and leave the impreſſion of grace behinde them. Becauſe God meant well to the Prodigall, hee ſo ordered the matter, that even contraries ſeemed to worke together for the beſt. If he had kept ſtill with his father, ten to one hee had been as the other brother. But even the miſery which he felt, which might have been the next way to have made him deſperate, and to have ruſht himſelfe upon vile courſes, to his ruine: or cauſed him to have laid violent hands upon himſelfe: yet, by Gods diſpenſation, wrought him to an utter loathing of his bad wayes, and himſelfe: and, to an earneſt deſire to ſeeke to his father for pardon. Much more then, doth the Lord bleſſe other wayes of ſinners, which are leſſe unlikely: as wee ſee in *Naaman* here, no one paſſage befell him, but brought him one ſtep neerer: and, when hee had his owne deſire, that wrought in him ſuch a brokenneſſe of ſpirit, that he was thereby fitted to receive a better boon from God with more thankfulnes. So that poor blinde man, *Ioh. 9.* (whom Chriſt purpoſed to ſave) although at his firſt cure of blindneſſe, he was not converted: yet, the Lord was ſo effectuall in his cure, ſo brake his heart by that love, that when hee was moſt bitterly reproached and excommunicated for confeſſing him, yet he gave not in, nor ſhranke, but convinced them with ſhame, and put them to ſilence: and, when our Saviour had him upon that advantage, he meets him againe in his ſtreight, and by a few words, ſpeaking to him, converted him. But theſe may ſerve.

Branch 6. Puts life and ſucceſſe into all occurrences.

God oft workes by contraries. Luke 14.

John 9.

Now for uſe of the point, it is manifold. Firſt, it is terror and admonition to all brutiſh prophane ones, and baſe hypocrites, who walke ſecurely in their way, ſome neglecting all meanes, others uſing the moſt holy and effectuall meanes in a meere formall manner: Both of them juſtly left at large by the Lord, to themſelves, ſo that nothing workes upon conſcience: But, even as the Wind-mill, turning in her round every way, yet ſtirre not out of their place: ſo is it with them after ten, twenty yeares, they are where they were the firſt day, no ſtep neerer God, but many further off. For why? alas! they are farre from acknowledging any preventing grace of God in their courſe: They know no other means, but to goe to Church, and preſent themſelves among others in the place, and ſo home againe: As for a providence to prevent them, to bow and ſway their hearts to any tenderneſſe and towardlineſſe, to ſee themſelves drawn by God, to know themſelves, to ſee into their nature, to abhorre it, and embrace all opportunities for their owne ſpirituall furtherance to ſalvation, they are farre from it: And as they live, ſo they dye: And, if the Lord at any time do ſcare their conſcience, or move them to any better thoughts of their wayes: yet alas! they have no intimation from God, of any mercy therein, are ſoone weary of them, they vaniſh as they came: And, when they looke backe into their courſe paſt, their youth, education, company, marriage, dwelling, Miniſtery, or the like, alas! they cannot ſpeake of any moving of heart, ſtopping their lewd courſe: ſtill they are in their thorough-

Vſe 1. Terror with admonition to ſuch as are under no prevention, but alway at one point.

2 Kings

thorough-fare, heare like blockes, are wearie of good company, ſhun all opportunities of good (for feare of being better) glad when they can waſh off good duties, and winde themſelves out of all occaſions for heaven! Alas! poore wretches! yee ſhall not need put off with one hand, that mercie which you cannot pull on with both: It muſt bee ſingular grace which muſt prevent you, if ever you come to good: But to goe againſt the edge of providence, thinking your ſelves happieſt when yee are out of the element of it, is fearfull? Doth it not ſting you, that you have felt ſo little of Gods prevention, in all your wayes? So many of your yeares, time, acquaintance, not onely ſtirred, but converted to God ſince your beginning, and you ſtill as ſapleſſe and ſenſeleſſe as ever? Doth it not diſquiet you to ſee, all is too little for your eaſe, will, world, luſts and vanities? What? have yee no ſighes, nor ſobs in your dreams, and upon your beds, how it ſhall fare with you in the day of wrath; and
2 Sam.2. that there will be bitterneſſe in the end? What (I pray you) is more miſerable then to live without God in the world? And who live ſo, but ſuch as feele not one pull by the eare, one knock at the doore of your hearts; or if they doe, forget and ſhake it off with as little ſavour or regard as pigges tread upon pearles! Alas! if hee who is the authour of the Scriptures, of Miniſtery, of Sacraments, of long-ſuffering, of afflictions, hath never yet caſt the leaſt ſeed of light, or ſparke of heat into you, which ſhould teach you to acknowledge theſe ordinances and adminiſtrations of his, and to tremble at them? Are you worſe then Divels?

Application of the terror by admonition. Therefore I pray you conſider of what I ſay; If the Lord raiſe not up the North winde to blow upon your ſpirits, to encline and perſwade them, it will be long enough ere you of your ſelves ſtirre one inch off your own ground? If he alter not your intentions, ſure it is you will intend ſmall good to your ſelves: but pleaſe your ſelves in your drouſie, dead and ſenſeleſſe way, till yee goe hence and be no more. Me thinks you ſhould rouze up your ſelves, and moan your ſelves to the Lord, ſaying: Am I the onely dry, barren wretch of all others, whom thy Spirit ſhould never blow upon? whom no mercies, croſſes, or government of thine ſhould ever affect? I ſee O Lord, thy ſteps whereſoever they goe, drop fatneſſe! and,
Cant.5.5. thy fingers drop mirrh upon the handle of the doore, where thou knockeſt! But I am ſtill a barren, deſolate creature, without any acquaintance with thee in thy wayes! And for the ſecond ſort of ſuch as have felt the Lord comming toward them in ſundry wayes, and that hee hath not left them without witneſſe, but by his Word, his workes, by death of wife, or husband, or by good company, or loſſe of children, eſtate, name: many privie and ſecret warnings of their conſcience, hath checked them, or offered them many meanes of good, and drawne their hearts thereby, but they have ſhaken them off as a dog doth a blow on the head. That ſometime in ſuch houſes and places as they have dwelt in, ſometimes in hearing ſome ſearching Sermons, or by the offer of Chriſtian yoke-fellowes,
Such as God hath prevented beware of dallying. or by other occaſions, the Lord hath ſolicited them earneſtly to turn and repent: howbeit, it is with them as with Iſrael in the wilderneſſe, whoſe carcaſſes were ſcattered therein, they have tempted him, & ſeen his works, but to no purpoſe, for the Lord is vexed with them for their ſtubbornneſſe, and their hard and rebellious hearts, which will not know God, nor come

come in: Oh! beware leſt this patience of God, which ſhould have drawne you to repentance, doe not harden your hearts to utter deſtruction! To both ſorts, I ſay this, Know it, if thoſe whom the Lord means to ſave, he wil be alway buſie about them, to accommodate all things to their calling and converſion: what a wofull caſe are they in who have (all their lives long) either ſeen no finger of his, in meaning them good, or elſe eſcaped his fingers moſt ſubtilly, and ſlily, as faſt as he hath purſued them? Doubtleſſe for ought can appeare, the Lord meanes them no good: if they had been ſheep belonging to his fold, he would never have ſuffered them to erre, and loſe themſelves ſo deeply in their luſts, but hee would have recalled them. But his not ſuffering the breath of his ſpirit one whit to ſtirre in them, doubtleſſe he meanes they ſhall nuzzle up themſelves in a dead, ſenſeleſſe eſtate unto perdition! Oh! what beds of eaſe doe you lye upon, that you ſhould take one nights reſt, two nights, till you finde your ſelves out of this miſery?

Secondly, this ſhould teach us to adore this great God, and onely wiſe, and that becauſe hee hath the key not of the wombe onely, and deeps, clouds and the grave: but of the hearts of the ſonnes of men: Hee onely can order their courſes, wayes and intentions, to their owne greateſt good, and his glory. It is not in man to order his owne way: the heart and purpoſes of men are their owne, but the diſpoſitions thereof are from the Lord: as the iſſues, ſo the preparations to life, and death, are in his hand. It is no priviledge of a Prince over his ſubjects, nor of a parent over his children, nor of husband over wife: They have authority to over-rule the bodies, the outward behaviour and duties of ſuch as are under them. But for the ſecret over-ſwaying of intentions, and turning them from their owne to his way, it is onely the Lords prerogative. It is with mans intentions, as with the body of a man in a ſhip who walkes upon the hatches from Eaſt to Weſt: Yet the motion of the ſhip being contrary, carries the man the way of her owne motion nevertheleſſe. This ſhould therefore breed in us ſingular reverence of God, and provoke us to magnifie him, both with our prayſes, and with our prayers. With our praiſes firſt: As the Church in the Pſalme having profeſſed that ſhee had ſeene goings of God, both towards their fathers and themſelves, in wilderneſſe and Canaan, that he might humble and try all in their heart, ſubjoynes preſently, The men ſingers that goe before, and the women ſingers after, and praiſe the Lord. If the Lord had not been on my ſide (ſhouldeſt thou ſay) in diſpoſing every way for my converſion, I had never been brought home. But I ſee that it was the finger of God, that when I had run my ſelfe into deſperate company, forſaken the counſell of all friends, & ſhaped a courſe to my ſelfe, perhaps to ſpend my patrimony riotouſly: perhaps to haunt harlots and lewd companions: or to travell beyond ſea in an humour of diſcontent to ſeek my fortunes, or to ſeek the world, and implod my ſelf in the dirt and dunghill of covetouſneſſe, or to match my ſelfe reſolutely with one whom I fancied, onely for her out-ſide, ſaying, Give mee her, for ſhe pleaſes me well: then did the Lord provide better for mee then I deſerved, turn mine intentions quite off, & divert them to ſerious thoughts of mine eſtate, prepare a good wife, a peaceable life in marriage, good friends, good Miniſtery, and turne mee from the pit. I ſought a good

Vſe 2. Inſtruction. Adore the wiſedome and love of God in his preventing grace. Jerem. 10. 23.

By praiſes. Pſal. 68 24. Deut. 8. Pſal. 123. 1.

2 Kings

frame in a blinde corner, under an Idoll, the Lord tooke him away, ſent a better, and tooke me napping in my hole and brought me home to himſelfe. No good ſoule that hath taſted theſe preventions of God, can bee ſilent: one prayſes God that living in a deſolate prophane corner of the Country in the practice of drunkenneſſe and lewdneſſe; the Lord ſent a friend by providence to the houſe where he dwelt, who by his ſober caniage and report of the fruit of the Goſpel in other parts, brake me off from my ſinfull life, bred a zeal after God & good means: by which I was haled out of my dungeon, to live under the Miniſtery in Goſhen, where I was convinced by the light of truth, and converted to God. Another comes in and ſaith, O Lord! if I had ruſht upon ſuch a match, lighted upon ſuch a Miniſtery, I had been quite loſt: thou plantedſt me better: As Pſal. 80. the Church bleſſes God for pulling her from Egypt where ſhe grew as a li'ly among thornes, into a better ſoile. So ſhould we, adore Gods preventing us, accommodating and ſuting occaſions, croſſing lets, giving ſtrength to the meanes, and overruling purpoſes: as no doubt the woman John 4. going to her kinsfolke, and ſaying, Come, ſee a man who hath told me all: magnified mercy, which finding her in a curſed, ſcornefull and prophane way, ſtopt her, and changed her heart. *Paul* (to be ſure did ſo: 1 Tim.1.17. having ſhewed how God found him a perſecutor, blaſphemer, and wronger of innocents: yet abounded in mercy, and called him home: Oh! he cannot wonder enough at it, tells it out to others, and himſelfe concludes, Now to the immortall, inviſible, olny wiſe God to ſway all to his ends) be all honour for ever! yea and we ſhould never ceaſe to call upon ours, aſwell as our ſelves to doe it: when I ſent thee forth (my child) as *Iacob* to *Laban*: the Lord did order thy journey for the beſt: defeated thee of that thou wouldeſt, and diverted thee to that which was farre ſafer and better for thee! Doſt thou not ſee how hee leaves others to themſelves? doth not prevent them with any ſoftneſſe and tenderneſſe, provides not well, ſuffers them to run wild, and to tire themſelves in their owne vanities! Thus good *Naomi* perceiving that God had heard her prayers for poore *Ruth* a ſtranger, to rivet her into the Church and make her the mother of *Davids* grandfather: provokes her to wonder, ſaying, who art thou my daughter? And hearing her to entitle God to the worke, ſhe confirmes her to truſt God for afterward.

Job 33.

Sundry paſſages of preventing providence.

Ruth 3.

2. Branch. Our prayers ſhould ſucceed our prayſes. Gen.24.12.

And ſecondly it ſhould ſtir up in us prayer for our ſelves and others, that the good hand of our God may alway attend and overrule our intentions and waies for good. *Eliezer* beleeving the Lord to be ſuch a wiſe and powerfull diſpoſer, fell to prayer, that when *Rebecca* ſhould come out to draw water for the cattell and for himſelfe, the Lord would prevent her with ſuch thoughts as might promote and ſucceed his enterpriſe. So ſhould we, in our journeyes, travailes, attempts of weight, changes of our eſtate going to the congregation, meeting good company: beſeech him that his good hand might appeare in all theſe, and through all the occaſions of the day, for the furthering and not diſmaying us in our holy courſe. Yea even for others we ſhould earneſtly beg, and ſay, Oh Lord! this day my husband goeth to ſuch a Sermon: Thou knoweſt he lookes at nothing ſave his owne ends, reſts upon his ſmooth civill bottome, that he is no groſſe perſon: his wordly wit, eaſe and pleaſure are the wheels

See Jub 1. end.

to

to carry him on: Oh Lord! oft have I begd mercy for him to open his heart and change him: Now prevent him Lord, let thy Miniſter be in his boſome, convince him, lay ſome block of thine to ſtop him, remoove the ſtumbling block of his owne iniquity: ſend him home more humble then he went, though thy ſpirit blow never ſo weakly, yet let it blow, and by little and little bring him home: Let me be no let to him, and thy worke. My unquiet heart is ready to diſcontent my ſelfe, (and ſo the husbands to the wife) when I ſee matters goe amiſſe, and ſo give way to paſſions, unkinde and unſavoury words: But alas! The worke is thy prevention: So for others: Lord when I ſend forth my children to the Univerſity, or to ſervice, I hope all ſhall be well: They ſhall meet thy good hand to proſper them, they ſhall be brought nearer to thee in knowledge, and thou wilt bleſſe ſtudies, tutor, company to bring them to better paſſe: But all is in thee, I have hitherto been too confident, they have miſcarried, and ſtumbled at baſe examples: Lord, now at laſt prevent them for good, and lay ſuch hold upon them, that they may not ſlip. *Iacob* ſending his ſonne *Benjamin* to Egypt (little thinking what God intended) yet intreated God to bleſſe them, and to ſend his Angel before them: and to give them favour in the ſight of the man. The Lord heard him in that, and added a further bleſſing: for he ſo hampered them by *Ioſephs* wiſe auſterity and policy, that their conſcience began to check them for their ſelling him: and ſo by degrees, their ſinne comming to light, they could crie out, God had found them all out in their baſeneſſe: Some of them inceſtuous as *Reuben* and *Iuda*, others murtherers, as *Simon* and *Levi*: and the reſt like them: but in likelihood this became the firſt ſtep to their reclaiming. Oh! ſo ſhould we beg, Lord we ſend them out into the wide world, or, wee are to goe to our long home and leave them behinde, among Lions, Beares, and Wolves and Foxes: Lord let them find favour with thy Majeſty, let thy good hand goe out with them: All pray for wealth and proſperity for their children: But Lord ſhew them thy countenance, and that they are of thine Elect, and therefore within thy Covenant, whereſoever they become, prevent them with grace, let thy Miniſters and people love them, let all turne to their good, their ſervices, their dwellings, tradings, marriages, Miniſtery: and let them ſee that none can finde out any thing after thee, that thou art in all, becauſe things could not have any way framed better for them, then they ſhall finde. Stop all lets, and croſſings either from within, their proud vain hearts; or from without, Satan his ſubtilty, and the baites or ſnares of this world!

Ezek.14.3.

Gen.43.13, 14.

Cap.45.

Pſal.4.6.7.

Adde to both theſe: It ſhould hold us in an holy awe and reverence of God, and teach us to ſet his Crowne upon his head, when we ſee, tis not all our counſells, Miniſtery (be it never ſo powerfull) education, thought and care which can prevent our owne hearts, or the hearts of ours, or others who belong to us, with any goodneſſe: we may pray, and commend them to God as *Iſaac* and *Rebecca* did *Iacob* in that ſad pilgrimage of his to Padan: The Lord it muſt be who muſt ſucceed him, who muſt encourage him at Luz, and ſet forward his journey with proſpering: So that this ſhould abaſe us in all beſt attempts. *Salomon* could not (with all his wiſedome) foretell whether a foole or a wiſe man ſhould inherit all his travailes. I confeſſe it ought to ſtay us from diſcontent, if God have not

It ſhould breed humiliation in our hearts.

Gen.28.1.2.3.

Eccle.2.19.

2 Kings

heard us for our children, but ſuffered them to run riot, if we have (as *Iob*) jealouſly offered ſacrifice for them, and commended them to the good hand of God: but all this will not exempt us from greefe when we ſee them ſcapethrifts and unhappy ones, when we doe not commend them to the word of his grace, we may thanke our ſelves if they thrive not: yet, in our beſt and moſt ſolicitous deſires, wee muſt not reſt ſatisfied in our endeavours, but ſtill humbly tremble under the power of that God, whoſe prerogative it is to prevent them with mercy, to accommodate all occaſions, to ſtop all obſtacles, and to ſucceed all helpes for their good. Oh! the woefull ruine of thouſands who have bin children of the choyſeſt prayers, teares, coſt and care, ſhould teach us to lie low before the Lord in this caſe. *Monica* was ſo carefull for her ſonne *Auguſtine*, that *Ambroſe* told her, the ſonne of ſuch prayers could not periſh: and as it fell out, he was a true Prophet, for never had any man greater and ſtranger preventions, as may eaſily be ſeene in that life of his (written by his Deacon to excellent good purpoſe) as the lives of many other Worthies both ancient and moderne have bin, for the ſetting forth of the bleſſed fruit of Gods preventing providence, both for the ſalvation of the parties, and unſpeakable good of Gods Church by the labours of ſuch inſtruments. And for this uſe ſo much.

Uſe 3. Of Conſolation. 1. Branch. Experience of former prevention ſhould encourage us for time to come.

Thirdly, this point ſhould be a great conſolation to all ſuch as have had experience of ſuch mercy preventing them. It ſhould comfort and encourage them from all thoſe doubtfull diſtempers which ariſe up in their fearfull mindes, that God will leave them in the midſt of his work, unperfect and unfiniſhed. It is a wofull unthankfulneſſe in many, who having found God gracious to them and theirs beyond expectation, in preventing much evill, ſeaſoning them betimes, even in their tender years, and ſtopping evill: That yet they dare not truſt him forth on: eſpecially if they perceive any ſtaggering in themſelves, or delaying of their deſires, ſo that God proceeds not on with them and theirs, according to their hopes. But let them learne of a woman, *Manoahs* wife, to correct their folly: who hearing her husband to feare leaſt God would ſlay them: anſwered, no; for then God would never have freely diſcovered himſelfe to them at all, touching a Son which ſhould ſave Iſrael. Surely if thoſe firſt free preventions, and gales of grace were ſo priſed, and ſo thankefully entertained, and obſerved by us; wee ſhould not dare to give over God ſo eaſily for the finiſhing of his worke. But it is commonly mens dalliance with the firſt grace of God, and his early preventions of us and ours, yea it is our preſumption upon free mercy, (as if it were pinned to our ſleeves) which cauſes us to winde it about our fingers, and carry it looſe about us (as a pearle in a looſe pocket) and which cauſes the Lord to blaſt us, to change his firſt courſe with us, to ſuffer us to wax pearke, and ſawcy with him, and to venture upon ſuch occaſions, companies, and actions, as, at firſt, we durſt not thinke of: And ſo the Lord frownes upon us, and changes our firſt motions, into cold qualmes, and looſe affections, and the baſe fruit of our preſumption; to trie whether his grace be pretious or no, and whether we will forſake our fatneſſe and ſweetneſſe of firſt beginnings, to exalt our ſelves, our wits, conceits, and humours: and through embracing of lying vanities, forſake our mercy. If

Judg. 13. 22. 23.

Dallyance with Gods firſt preventions, is the cauſe to change his courſe.

we

we doe, let us know the Lord prevented us, rather to make our deſtruction inexcuſable, then to convert us. But if it be otherwiſe, then let it appear in our extraordinary humiliation and teares, repentance and recovery of our former workes and affections: let not Satan ſtall us in our own mire of ſinne, nor oppreſſe us with diſtruſtfull bondage and deſpondency of heart, to drive us to deſpaire: let all our vanity be vaine, and all our ſtollen waters bitter, our pride and new-found ſelfe-contents odious unto us, in compariſon of former old compaſſions: let us bee zealous, I ſay, and amend: rather then harden our hearts, ſo far, till the print of our firſt preventions, tenderneſſe, feare, and conſcience be quite worne out. This by the way, not impertinently.

Jonah 2.8.

But to returne; if there have been a levell and even eye to walke according to our firſt Grace: let us not warpe ungrounded feares out of unthankfull diſtruſt, to thinke like that wretch, 2 King. 3. God hath brought us to this point to forſake us, or (as they ſaid) to ſlay us in the wilderneſſe. Read Jer. 2. and we ſee how the Lord ſpeaks to ſuch as cavilled againſt him: Oh! (ſaith he) I remember the love I made toward thee in the wilderneſſe (a barren drie land) and the firſt love of thy youth, when thou wert dainty to me: and ſtill I can beteame thee the ſame love, if thou wert not weary of it. A ſweet place. Could God finde in his heart to be ſo to Revolters, to Idolaters, ſuch as had forſaken his fountaine, and digged pits to themſelves; and ſhall he not much more (poore ſoule of little faith) remember thee? Art thou of no more worth then ſo? Oh! the Lord remembers his firſt love ſtill, its pretious to him, he cannot forget it, and is it not ſo to thee? Put caſe his aſſiſting and perfecting grace ſeemes not in thine eye ſo proportionall at the firſt? May there not bee cauſe? Is it not to teach thee to claſpe about the firſt, as the Ivy about the bow to ſuck out juice from it to ſupport thee? Doubt not, but proceed: He that prevented thee firſt perhaps when thou ſoughtſt him not, or ſoughtſt him but formally; he will not faile thee now: he will ſticke to thee by his aſſiſting grace alſo, uphold thee in thy zeale, meanes uſing, make the myſtery of Chriſt more cleare and evident, draw forth reall deſires, and hungers, eſteems and diligence: yea he will not give thee over till he have alſo finiſhed the worke of converſion and effectuall calling in thee by the worke of faith: and by daily familiariſing with thine heart by his promiſes, create the fruit of the lips which is peace, in thee. Onely ſuffer not thy ſelfe to wax lazy, looſe and dallying with him, to give him over thy ſelfe, and then lay the fault upon him: That he was very forward to lay the foundation, but was not able to finiſh his building. None but hypocrites dare bring in ſuch verdicts, (rather ſlanders) upon God: Be not thou the firſt.

Iſaih 57. 17.

Luke 14.30.

And againe, it may be conſolation in a ſecond regard to all ſuch: to wit, that he who not being tied to them by promiſe, yet called them, will now much more ſticke to them having a promiſe to plead. Which I ſpeake, becauſe many forgetting the old mercies of God by a worldly unthankfull, and eſtranged heart, make that part of their lives moſt ſad which ſhould be gladdeſt of all. And that, by diſtruſting God for the mercie conſequent upon their calling: They feare, that God will never make them maſters over ſome ſpeciall corruptions of theirs, pride, world eaſe:

2. Branch. of encouragement. Rom 5.8.

What to doe when feare of our corruptions maſters us?

2 Kings

Deut. 32. 13. 14.

2 Cor. 7. 1. 2.

Judg. 3. 2.

Esay 25.

Luk. 12. 23. 24

Matth. 6. 32.

2 Pet. 1.

Esay 63.

1 Sam. 23. 27.
2 Sam. 17. 7.
Gen. 31. 29.
Acts 9. 9.

Acts 12. 3.

ease: nor increase any grace to any fulnesse, but onely leave them to a poore pittance; nor yet uphold them in their outward wants and crosses of poverty or infamy, &c. by his all-sufficiencie: nor rid them out of their streights by unreasonable men: nor recover them out of their revolts to their former integritie of course. To whom I answer: Doe yee thus requite the Lord, O yee unthankfull people, scarce worth the name of people? Did the Lord give yee brasse out of the stones, and silver out of his hidden treasures, mercie when yee looked for none, that yee should still distrust his promise? If when yee were strangers, yet he so prevented yee to make yee children, shall hee forsake yee being now in covenant? Did he kill the old Serpent, and Leviathan, and shall hee suffer her spawne to destroy yee? Did he remove the guilt of sin from destroying you, and shall he leave the venome of it to bee a goad in your side, and a pricke in your eyes, to make your life desolate? No, not except yee forsake the promise, looking that God should drop mercie still out of clouds, and prevent you as at first, without any beleeving of yours! No: hee now puts ye to it, to work out your own salvation with fear, & having his pretious promises, labour to perfect your sanctification: To take his Sword, Helmet and Breast-plate, and fight the holy warre of God against your selves, and all enemies, and not to looke that the Egyptians should still be drowned, while you looke on. While yee were children, yee did as such: but being men, the Lord looks his stocke should grow, and bee put to occupying, and that yee should be setled and rooted therein. As for outward blessings, hath God made you a feast in the mountaines, and will he deny yee it in the valleyes? Will he so cloath the Lillies, that labour not nor spin, and shall hee leave you to shift for your selves, who (next to the kingdome) serve his providence for a meet portion here? shall hee not cast in these things without sin or sorrow? Did hee prevent your soules from perdition, and shall hee not prevent want from your bodies? Doth he so cloath the hearb and flowers of the field, which to morrow are cast into the Oven: and shall he not cloath, feed and provide for you in this world, for whom hee hath provided a crowne hereafter (as *Peter* saith) immortall and not fading? To conclude, if hee have over-ruled your intentions for his owne glory and your owne salvation, should yee feare lest any Divell, or instrument of his, should come between you and home? Say thou livest in dark times, in places where the wicked beare sway; what then? As the Church *Esay* 63. cries, Thou wert mercifull to us of old, Lord, what? are all thy bowels and rollings restrained? Oh! deliver us still? Thou canst over-sway their intentions by the same prevention, and turne them to the contrarie aime! Their policies and devices against thee and thine, shall not preuaile: thou canst scatter them, thou canst avert, convert or pervert them at thy pleasure: Avert them as *Saul* from *David*: pervert, as *Achitophels* against *David*: convert, as *Paul* from a persecutor. They shall say as *Laban* to *Iacob*, It was in my power to do you hurt; but the God of your Fathers appeared unto me yester night and prevented me: *Herod*, *Acts* 12. intended to bring out *Peter* to be slaine after *Iames*: but the Lord had another purpose which overthrew his, as cob-webs swept downe with a besome. In a word, if God once declared his prevention of mercie toward us, Oh!

let

let us not preſume, yet let us honour him thus far by our experience, that ſtill the ſame God will be at worke for us in our particular courſe, to turn all to better then wee could look for, as to poore *Ruth* when ſhe went out to gleane barley, the Lord found her out reſt all her dayes: Oh! if once he have delighted in us, he ſtill will rejoyce to make us objects of like mercie, ſo that all ſhall ſee us to be his favourites, and long for our portion. And for this point, Sermon an Verſe, thus much. Let us pray, &c.

2 Kings

Ruth 2. & 3.

THE THIRD LECTVRE
Vpon the tenth verſe.

VERSE X.

And Eliſha ſent a Meſſenger unto him, ſaying, Go waſh ſeven times in Iordan; and thy fleſh ſhall come againe to thee, and thou ſhalt be cleane.

VERS. 10. *But Naaman was wroth, &c.*

THIS poore Pilgrime, and patient *Naaman*, as yee have heard (beloved) hath ſtood ſome time at the Prophets doore, denying himſelfe, and his eſteeme, honour and favour with his Prince: he and his train ſubmitting themſelves, and ſtanding at the courteſie of God and his Prophet for his cure. And, although we heare of no words, or ſuit comming from him, yet his very habit and ſtanding, in the deep ſilence of it, ſpeaketh and calleth aloud for the Prophets helpe. And indeed, it had been hard-hearted and unmercifull for *Eliſha* (having himſelf ſent for him to his houſe, when he was wildred) ſeeing how humble his ſuppliant is, to have let him to ſtand as a dumb pageant, without ſalutation. Courteſie and morals could not have denied him that favour: and much more that Spirit wherewith the Prophet was filled, a ſpirit of mildneſſe, mercie, exorableneſſe and eaſineſſe to be intreated of a petitioner ſo miſerable, and comming ſo farre for helpe: muſt needs hearken to his requeſt. This verſe therefore ſhewes us, what meſſage *Eliſha* ſends him to the doore. And now (at this third Sermon) we are paſſed the Antecedent occaſions leading us to the Contents of the Cure: and are come to the chiefe ſubſtance of the ſtory. Whereof to make a full Analyſe all at once, becauſe it would clog the hearers memory, therefore we thinke it here ſuperfluous, onely wee will ſeverall the ſtory into her branches, opening the firſt of them, here in our entrance upon it, but for the reſt we will referre them to the threſhold of their particular handlings, that every thing may be more lively and better remembred. The whole ſtory then hath theſe five diſtinct parts: The firſt

Entry upon the ſubſtance of the miracle.

2 Kings

The generall heads of the story, five.

first *Elisha* his message sent to *Naaman* standing at his gate, and full of expectation, and that in this tenth verse. The second is *Naamans* entertainment and construction of it, and how it tooke with him, and that in the eleventh and twelfth verses. The third generall is, the Rejoynder of his poore servants upon their masters misconstruction of the message, and that containes their loyall and serious treatie and counsell of wiser interpretation, and for better carriage: that in the 13. verse: The fourth is the issue and happinesse of all: the sweet conclusion of a sad entrance, and that is, that upon the overture and intimation of his servants (or rather of grace) he changes his former resolution to be gone, into an obedient submission to wash in Jordan. The fifth and last, the issue of his obedience: partly immediate, that hee found the Prophet true, hee was instantly cleansed, his flesh returning as a young childes: partly remote, and consequent upon it: in his returne from Jordan to the Prophets house, and making his respective acknowledgement: in his zealous and loving offer of recompence: in his earnest though weak devotion: in his firm & full resolution of future closing with God: in his tender and most sensible touch of heart for the sin which mainly pinched him: with request for advice about it for time to come: whereto the loving answer of the Prophet is annexed; Go in peace. These are the parts. First of the first, in this tenth verse.

The first of the five generalls, Branches of the tenth verse three.

There is no great difficultie in the words: That which is, may be resolved in the opening of the heads of doctrine arising out of them. And they are three in order: First, that *Elisha* sends a messenger, but comes not out in person to *Naaman*: that concernes the manner and way of *Elisha* his answering. The second concernes the matter of his answer, Goe, and wash seven times in Jordan: A message still harping upon the former string tending to vindicate all the glory to God, by substituting of such a creature, as could steale no honour from God. The third issues from a question, That seeing God aimed at his owne glory, to which end hee would use still the creature in the cure: The answer to which is, the Lord having bound sure enough for himselfe and his owne glory, in so poore a creature, and unlikely healer, as waters: doth yet in a sort provide for *Naaman* afterwards: viz. That whereas there was implied in this charge, a gracious promise that he should be healed, the Prophet would confirme his weake faith in the promise and unseen power of God; by the reall signe of a thing to be seen and felt, even the waters of Jordan. This being shortly premised for distinctnesse of the point, let us open the first of them, and the ground of that which floweth thence.

The first point in this. It was not pride or statelinesse in Elisha to deny treaty with Naaman.

Elisha (we see) comes not himselfe, but sends his messenger. Why? I pray you. Was it for state, and surlinesse? No surely. That had been a very indirect meane, to have cured pride, or selfe-love in *Naaman*: or to have drawne him out of himselfe to one above himselfe. Popish arrogancie, and Pharisaicall pride of Ministers, thinking to hold men at a certaine distance toward their greatnesse, recompenceth not, nor attaines Gods righteousnesse. That proud Prelate, and man of sinne, who setteth up himself above all that is called God, and under a title of the Vicarship of Christ, playes the Antichrist: who hath magnified himselfe hitherto, and enlarged his territoties by an outward setting up himselfe with pomp

pomp in the eyes of a deluded multitude of ſuperſtitious fooles: hath yet never wonne any honour in the ſoules and conſciences of men, but rather made himſelf to ſtink in mens noſtrils through his intolerable inſolencie. His treading upon Emperours neckes, kicking off their Crownes, dethroning them by excommunication, forcing them to lackey him on horſeback, and holding his ſtirrop: His making a reall, eſſentiall difference of himſelfe from other Biſhops and Miniſters: holding them at ſtaves end, dancing attendance upon his haughtineſſe (Holineſſe I ſhould ſay) moneths, weekes, dayes and yeares, ere audience can be given: ſcorning the Laity as accurſed. This pride, though it have kept up his Satanicall tyranny through feare and terrour in the hearts of Idolaters; yet hath made him and his doctrine, life and manners, execrably odious. For why? it is as contrary to Chriſts humbleneſſe, as the ſtate of one mounted upon a Spaniſh Jennet, is contrary to the meanneſſe of one riding on an Aſſe: and that by the confeſſion even of ſome of his owne ſtraine. So that, when his Meſſenger *Auguſtine* came here firſt into England, in his name and pride, to ſubdue our Britany to Popiſh yoke: the poore Monkes of Bangor ſummoned to appeare to his preſence, beholding the baſe pride of his ſeat, raiſed throne-wiſe above the ordinary ſeats of others: even by his Maſters ear-marke he was ſmelt and diſcarded as a proud uſurper, and no commer with an Apoſtles ſpirit.

Popiſh inſolency of Clergie over Gods people intolerable.

Which I ſpeake not as if I would from hence raiſe any doctrine from a negative ground: but leſt the queſtion ſhould bee reſolved without ſome obſervation, this I would ſay to our ſelves of the Clergie, that humblenes towards our people is the trueſt & ſureſt preſervative of our honor intire in their ſouls. State, and diſtance may ſet us up in the ſenſe of ſome ignorant ones, who rather ſlaviſhly feare us, then love us (and yet even theſe, when they utter their thoughts, will give us their livery:) But as for thoſe who know how to value a Miniſter of God in the name and for the worke of a Prophet, nothing more honours a Preacher in their hearts, then his humility. I deny not, but there ought to be due reſpect of people to their Miniſter: but I deny that it is purchaſed by auſterity and ſtatelines: And yet I do not allow a Miniſter to be haile fellow well met with each companion: nor, to avoyd the extreame of ſtatelineſſe with another extreame of communeſſe, complying with them in the Ale-houſe, bowlings, or boon-fellowſhips: to hang about their ſhop-windowes, & mixe himſelfe with them in his paper-ſervice at all turns, buyings, bargaines, wills, purchaſes (except in a pious and neceſſary way of Chriſtian love.) But, by the authority of his labours, and the integrity of his life, to uphold that eſteeme which is meet for a diſpenſer of Chriſt: and, in this ſenſe we ought to ſee that no man deſpiſe us. But yet, on the other ſide, we muſt not over-Lord it among them, to bring them under our girdles, and to boaſt our ſelves as the beſt men in the towne: for ſo ſhall wee but out-ſhoot the Divell in his owne bow, and ſhew our ſelves diſtruſtfull of Gods providence, as if he were not able to bring forth our light, except we our ſelves doe it, by reflecting our owne ſhine and beames upon our ſelves. No doubtleſſe: we ſhall loſe more in the Hundred then we gain in the Shire, and left our worth to be valued by others. There is a baſe Proverb, Thou ſhalt bee ſo much eſteemed by others, as thou eſteemeſt thy

No doctrines from negatives.

By the way yet, ſome clearing of the doubt, and an hint of inſtruction.

Tit 2.15.

1 Pet. 5.3.

Pſa. 37.5. 6.

A baſe proverb.

2 Kings

thy ſelfe. But it holds onely in the Divels dominion. As for God(who reſiſts the proud,but gives grace to the humble) the weapons of his warfare are not carnall,but ſpirituall,caſting downe ſtrong holds,and all high thoughts to the obedience of Chriſt, and moſt of all in our ſelves, who are his Standard-bearers. But I muſt recall my ſelfe from this negative digreſſion.

1 Pet.5.5.

2 Cor.10,4.

Why Eliſha comes not forth to Naaman.

Well then, if it were not pride and ſtatelineſſe in the Prophet, what cauſe was there why he ſhould ſend to *Naaman*, rather then come forth himſelfe? Was he not expected? and, might he not feare ſome aſperſion to his perſon, God, and Religion, by his aloofneſſe? Surely, by the way, theſe things ought much to curb our baſe paſſions! Biſhop *Hooper*, that famous Martyr of Chriſt, and man of tender conſcience, being of ſomwhat a more retired & private ſpirit and carriage then uſual,did cauſe ſome Chriſtian men and women,who honoured his integrity, and ſought advice from him: to wonder, and to ſtumble at his auſterity. A defect which he could not eaſily amend in himſelfe. But it coſt him ſorrow afterward,as ſome of his letters witneſſe, that he ſhould grieve any good heart by ſuch an offenſive carriage. Thoſe letters are alſo extant, wherein reverend *Ridley* craves pardon of his deere fellow-Martyrs *Bradford* and *Sanders* for his unbrotherlike paſſages in ſome caſes: a time there will be, in which every one that feares God, will mourne for the leaſt miſdemeanor in this kinde. Gods glory is pretious, and his peoples ſouls coſt deare. They muſt not be offended for our humours, or trifles: better a mill-ſtone were hang'd about our neckes, and wee caſt with it into the ſea,then to offend one little one. This by the way.

Miniſters muſt be tender of Gods glory, and jealous of offence by their carriage.

I anſwer, there had been in this caſe of *Eliſha* ſome feare of this, I mean of offence, if God had not diſcharged him from it by a *Superſedeas* to his ordinary charge: but having a warrant for it, hee might truſt God the better for preventing of hurt. As the Prophets were extraordinary perſons, ſo the moſt of their actions bare a ſpeciall reference towards God,not themſelves: And, ſo it was here: *Eliſha* was a man familiar enough in his owne caſe, as appeares in his homely and courteous carriage towards the woman that ſet him up a Table, Stoole and Candleſtieke in his Chamber. This was no great ſtate (nothing neere *Naamans*) yet thankfully accepted. But there is a ſeaſon for all things: to bee familiar with a poore Tradeſman,and to be ſtrange to a Prince, both lawfull. Now the Lords worke was in doing, and *Eliſha* might not procure to himſelfe the note of courteſie, by breaking a command, as that Prophet (who to avoid diſcourteſie) went backe to eate with the old Prophet, and loſt his life. When God diſcharges us by a cloſer command, its folly to affect the name of unſeaſonable obeying.

2 Kin.4.12.13

Eccle.. 2. 3. 2.

1 King.13.19.

And by the way, it is no ſmall error in men to interpret Scriptures according to the letter, without reſpect had to the ſcope, and circumſtances proper to the text. As the Papiſts, who by this meanes, ſnatch extraordinary facts of *Moſes* and Chriſts faſting Matth. 4. *Ehuds* killing *Eglon*, Judg.4. *Elijah's* affronting *Ahab* 1 King.20.21. or the like, to ſuch ends of their owne, as, not God, but themſelves are the authors of. Not the fact of burning the Paſſeover reliques, Exod 12. and of robbing the Egyptians: but the warrant of God over-ruling ordinary caſes, for ſpeciall ends

The Letter of the Scripture not to be wreſted againſt the ſence for mens humours.

2 Kings

ends of his owne muſt be regarded. Now I ſay, the Lord had another end in withdrawing *Eliſha* from going forth. For why? He ſaw he was more carnally adicted to the Prophet then he ought: he came full of carnall eſteem of him, as a man of great power to worke miracles: He looked alſo at the outward cure: full he was of himſelf and his carnall hopes, who but *Eliſha* with him, as a great Phyſitian with a patient, for hope of cure: This, together with a confidence, he had of his owne ſufficiency to give him full content for his paines, as if he had gone to an ordinary man, and lookt to take and pay: did wholly eclipſe the honour of God, who will not give his glory to another. The Lord loved *Eliſha* well, and his reputation, as we ſee Cap. 2. yet not ſo well as to part with his own, for his ſake. If God had intended only a bodily cure, it had been enough to have come out and laid on hand upon the leproſie, and ſo, an end. But the Lord who had a further ſcope, even to acquaint *Naaman* with himſelfe, his power, love and mercy in healing his ſoule alſo: ſaw, that this could not be effected withonr fetching a further compaſſe: *viz.* by caſting out the aime at bodily cure alone: the confidence upon a Prophets skill, the admiration of a mans perſon, the fulneſſe of *Naamans* carnall hopes: all theſe juſtled aſide, the glory of God, and the preparation of *Naamans* heart to entertaine the gift with a due reſpect to the giver: And therefore, the Lord thinkes it beſt to ſuſpend *Naaman* a while longer, and to traine him by degrees to a more ſpirituall heart in embracing ſuch a double mercy. The Lord ſtrives with his ſpirit, as Gen. 6.2. to drive out of it that ſame carnall ſavour, hope & content wherewith he had filled himſelf, having heard that the Prophet could heale him. As for ſpirituall cure he felt no diſeaſe, nor knew any remedy of it: But, the Lord meant it, and therefore meant that *Naaman* ſhould in the meane ſeaſon be ſecretly prepared for it. As our Saviour told *Peter*, what I doe now, thou knoweſt not, but hereafter thou ſhalt. The Lord therefore by this croſſing his hopes, doth deſire to let in a further light into his minde, then yet he had: That he might conſider, that he was not now come to an ordinary perſon, to heale his body: but to the Lord, and his Prophet, to worke a divine cure: here therefore, he muſt looke up to God, ſtand to his curteſie, adore his power, love, goodneſſe and mercy: here is no marquet for money to beare maſtery, all muſt come from meer goodneſſe: and that, not from a Prophet, but from the Lord working by him. Now therefore having to doe with him, let his carnall ſavour, and erroneous conceits ly by, let him empty himſelfe of a wordly heart, and get an heavenly, as having only to do with God and not man.

The ground affords many ſweet meditations: I wil briefly touch upon two or three, and ſo proceed. The firſt is this, All the courſe which God takes in bringing home the ſoul to God is (in a word) but this one, to ſubdue the carnality and unſavourineſſe of the heart, and the blindneſſe and error of the minde, to the obedience of Chriſt. From firſt to laſt the Lord aimes at this, (if we marke it) through all the preparations of effectuall calling, whether by Law or Goſpel: which may appeare by this, that the iſſue of all the worke of calling is faith. And faith (we know) is the cheefe obedience of the heart to the word, both commanding and promiſing, and tries moſt of all, the ſubjection of the ſoule. Such then as

More ſpecially of the cauſe.

1. To prevent carnall eſteem of his perſon: and the outward cure.

2 King. 2. 5. 6. Eſay 42. 5. 6.

2. To caſt out his owne ſpirit.

3. And to raiſe up his ſpirit to God.

John 13. 7.

Gods way in converting any is chiefly to ſubdue carnall ſavour.

as is the end, ſuch is the preparative: all the whole courſe of God therefore in converting the ſoule, is to yoke downe and ſubject the heart to himſelfe, by caſting out all which is ſet up in it, againſt it as *Paul* ſpeakes. 2 Cor.10.4. All oppoſition, all rebellion, all enmity which is therein, whether before the meanes revealed, (as all naturall poiſon of heart (ſuch as *Naaman* here is full of, carnall ſavour of his cure, reſting to the prop of fleſh and the Prophets ability) or under the meanes themſelves revealed, muſt ſtoop to God; ſomewhat or other, terrors or promiſes, or both, muſt rid the ſoule of each high thought, ſtrong hold, and error which ſuffers not the Lord to enter. So is it here with *Naaman*: he comes full of carnall confidence upon the arme of fleſh, and his owne rewards, hope of ſpeeding and going home an whole man; but the Lord intending to ſend him home a new man, croſſes him in his old, and ſtrives to ſubdue the ſavour of his fleſh to the ſavour of divine power. Note well.

Obiect. It may be objected, that this prevaild not with *Naaman*, for in the next verſe he fell to rage againſt the Prophet.

Anſw. I anſwer, Although this courſe of God tooke not effect preſently, yet it was not loſt: it lay as leaven in the meale the whiles, and had the due effect in his ſeaſon. But for the point, know it (brethren) and judge your ſelves thereby. There is in the ſoule a kingdome of darkeneſſe, and Satan ruling thereby: If God meane good to the ſoule, he will tranſlate it from under the ſubjection of this kingdome, before he tranſlate it under the kingdome of his deare ſonne: Looke therefore to your ſelves well at this plat: and, firſt, be not diſcouraged although you finde under the meanes and ordinances, Word, Law, Goſpel, faſting and prayer, wofull fightings of corruption and concupiſence, rebellion againſt the worke of the Law, reſiſtance of the Goſpel: Theſe will be: and oftimes it is better it be thus, then not: for if the Lord be in the worke, this very rebellion againſt God ſhall turne to good, and abaſe the ſoule ſo much the more after, as before it ſwelled againſt God, I meane when he ſhall overpower it by that Spirit which convinceth of ſinne. Then I ſay ſhall the ſinfulneſſe of the ſoule out of meaſure ſinfull, occaſion to it ſelfe a deeper humbling, then if it had never rebelled. Be not therefore troubled at that: but be ſure that the worke which it leaves behinde it, be ſound: be ſure the ſoule revolt not to her former ignorance, fleſhly ſavour, fulneſſe of her owne wiſedome, and corrupt, worldly, proud, peeviſh and prophane frame, leſt it grow worſe then ever.

2. Branches of uſe of Exhortation. 1. Branch. Judge of our ſelves by this order. Col.1.13.

Rebellion in the regenerate tends to the greater humiliation. Rom.7.13.18.

2. Branch. Of exhor. Rom.14.17.

2 Cor.6.14

Secondly (brethren, to be ſhort) let Gods end be our end in the whole courſe of the Miniſtery. Judge not his kingdome of grace, peace, and righteouſneſſe to be ſet up in us, before the kingdome of ſin and darkeneſſe bee pulled downe. Chriſt and Belial, two Kings, two kingdomes cannot ſtand: one throne muſt be ſet up upon the others ruines. The text tells us, 1 King. 16.22. when *Omri* and *Tibni* ſtood in competition for the Crowne, the followers of *Omri* prevailed againſt the other: So, *Tibni* died, and *Omri* raigned. Juſt ſo it is here. Till *Tibni* die, *Omri* cannot raigne. The Kingdome of God cannot ſtand till Satans be pulled down, for they are incompatible. Judge not your ſelves then I beſeech you by thoſe fruits which make ſemblance of goodneſſe in you: as by encreaſe of knowledge, gifts to pray, much hearing, good memory, reforming

The beſt judgement of Gods people, is not by what they have, but what they want.

and

and abſtaining from ſome evills, biting in ſome ill qualities, which dare not breake out. But judge your ſelves by the caſting downe of your ſtrong forts, and high thoughts, and ſtout hearts: one dram of this will ſecure you more of a ſafe eſtate, and hold out longer then a pound of the other. Try whether in all your other proceedings, & ſeemings to grow in the houſe of God, your ſelves grow daily lowlier, meeker, brokenner: for all Gods gifts are ſeaſoned with humilitie: and negatives (in this kinde) are your ſureſt markes: not ſo much what you have got in knowledge, but what you have loſt of your owne. If yee prove this latter, the other will proſper alone: otherwiſe this will be a canker to fret out the marrow of the other. It is no hard thing for a man to judge what meat his appetite ſtands to, or not. Obſerve your owne frame, after all your hearings, God will not judge yee by the helpes, meanes, or gifts yee have: but by what your ſelves are. If then your ſecret conſciences bear you witneſſe, that when all is done, yet a proud heart, a ſcornfull ſpirit, uncharitable, ſelfe-loving, ranke for it owne ends, reſting upon carnall proppes, angry, revenging, claſping to the creature (as *Naaman* here did) or the like, ſtill lurke in yee, and beare the ſway, when ye are put to it; in Gods feare doe not reſt till the Word have wrought a further worke in you, and caſt downe this kingdome in you. Seek for more working both by the terror and promiſe: For ſurely till this old kingdome be down (at leaſt ſubdued and tributary, as *Sauls* houſe under *David*, *Edom* and *Moab* to *Salomon*;) all your hearings cannot profit you. Tremble when yee meet with the old kingdome (you ſhall ſoone try your ſelves when occaſion of triall comes) and be well aſſured, that whom the Lord calls, them he ſubdues, and here he pulls up one prop, there another pillar of the old throne, here he ſubdues ignorance, there a falſe heart, there a carnall minde, the ſavour of the fleſh, the will of man, the pride, the ſtomacke, the wordly ends, till he have ruined the throne: And although a ſubtile profeſſor will cover all theſe with the mantle of Religion, yet ſtill the compariſon abides, becauſe he wants an heart to be rid of it. Butas for others, you may feele them with a glove: for even in the midſt of their devotions, giving thankes for meat, praying or hearing, their hearts are with their covetouſneſſe and luſts; and ſometimes they will be quarrelling and praying, talking of the world, and ſaying grace with one breath. But ſo much of this branch.

God ſubdues corruption in his by peece-meale.

A ſecond is this, I have noted before in *Naamans* crouching at *Eliſha* his gate, how that diſeaſe of his abaſed him very farre to ſuch an inferior as the Prophet was. Now we ſee he receives an affront from him, by him whom he ſo ſubmitted himſelfe unto, being ſo far from healing him at the firſt, that hee comes not out to ſalute him. And why? To teach him to ceaſe his crouching to the Prophet, and crouch to God another while.

The ſecond meditaion upon this.

Some might ſay, alas poore man! he had ſorrow enough before! but I anſwer, ſpare your pitty: This ſecond winde ſhakes no corne. It is not in an outward croſſe, nor the power of it, to ſubdue the heart to God: it may handſome a man in his outſide to manward, and make him ſtoope to man, but it cannot doe it to God. Wherefore now the Lord puts a tongue into the word and Meſſage of *Eliſha*, whereby he comes a little further to

Object. Anſw.

2 Kings

conſider whom hee had directly to deale with, even the Lord himſelfe, who ſuffers not the cure to proceed, to the end that hee might looke better about him, and ſee into his baſe heart, which hindred it. And wee muſt conceive that although this wrought not preſently, yet the Lord being with it, it wrought ſomewhat at laſt. Let it briefly teach us (beloved) thus much, no croſſe nor bodily ſtrait (of it ſelfe) can reach further then to a bodily end: There muſt bee a word added to the workes of God, before the heart will breake. The Lord muſt (as I noted before) ſpeak once and twice, ere pride will be hidden and the ſoule humbled in kinde, and then it ſtoopes. Well ſaid *Habacuc*, *Cap.*2. I heard thy voice, and my lips quivered, my limbes trembled, and rottenneſſe entred into my bones, that I might have peace in the day of trouble. And *Eſay*, *Cap.*28. asketh, whom ſhall I cauſe to underſtand, and whom ſhall I teach wiſedome? even him that is weaned from the breſts, and who trembleth at my words. It is the voice of God which muſt pierce the heart till it tremble. The voices of ſicke mens repentance wanting a word, vaniſh. The reaſon is, becauſe the workes alone are a brute ſound, and have no tongue in them: The word is all, onely God hath bleſſed it, and therefore other meanes are unbleſt. The word muſt be the interpreter. Nay, many times under a croſſe alone, the heart waxeth more hardned and rebellious: or at leaſtwiſe it puts off God with confeſſions under the rack: or elſe it windes out it ſelfe, and counts it as a common accident befalling mortality: Its my hard lot (ſaith one, God helpe me) to be thus afflicted. Even as bleſſings alone bring none to feele love from God (of themſelves) being common things beſtowed upon all ſorts as it hits, ſo is it with croſſes. Nay, ſome blinde idiots imagine Popiſhly, that their portion here in trouble, and ſtraits, is a ſigne that they have their hell here, and ſhall not therefore have it hereafter. But however, ſure it is, let a man have never ſo much ſickeneſſe, poverty, reproach, feare of death upon him: none of theſe are bleſſed to ſearch out his pride, jollity, carnall eaſe, unſavorineſſe, Atheiſme, worldlineſſe, or the poyſon of old *Adam*: Theſe all may lurke and abide under a croſſe: a man may ſtill nouzell himſelfe in his ſenſuality, ſecurity, rotten peace, unbeleefe, and hope that he is in Gods favour. But when the word comes, that daſhes out all errours, and falſe conceits. Why ſo? becauſe it brings God into the ſoule (as the Arke into the campe) and cauſes the ſoule to behold herſelfe in the glaſſe of his perfection; the neerer it comes to God, the more it loathes it ſelfe. I have now ſeene thee (ſaith *Iob*) therefore I abhorre my ſelfe in duſt and aſhes. Let it teach us never to reſt till the Lord hath turned us out of our common path, and brought us into a narrow way, even to deale with himſelfe. His word will preſent him unto us, as in a glaſſe wherein we may behold him in his excellent Attributes, his Juſtice, Wiſedome, revenge of his enemies, a Judge of the wicked, a rewarder of the righteous. This ſight will coole our courage (as it did *Naamans* here) ſtop us in our headlong courſes, make our owne conceits and errours odious, teach us to wait upon God, till he ſhall hearken to us: till he ſhall humble, convince, and perſwade us. Doubtleſſe, when wee come cloſely to behold his face, and to feele his authoritie over the conſcience, how ſevere an avenger he isof all our pride, rebellion; and that he

Bodily croſſes can reach no further then bodily ends. Job 33.13.

Heb. 4.12.

The word and voice of God onely able to pierce the heart.

Job 42.2.

2 Kings

he whom we have to deal with, beholds our inward man and all the corruption thereof: nothing is hidden to his eye, but all things are naked and manifeſt before him: then all our heat of ſpirit, confidence of our happy condition, diſdaine of others, pleaſing our ſelves in our carnall hopes, applauding our parts, our duties, performances, will vaniſh as a private mans lands and livelihoods vaniſh in a great Mappe of the world. Then our plumes quaile, and we ſay, depart from us O Lord ſinfull wretches. In the ſight of this Sunne, all our darkeneſſe, and unrighteouſneſſe, become irkeſome, and all our corruption is ſwallowed up in this ſea of his perfection. So much for this.

Heb 4. 13.

Luke 5. 7.

The third and laſt ſhort meditation from this ground is this, that as the Lord began before to humble *Naaman* in part, ſo he holds him ſtill cloſe to the worke of humiliation, and enlarges him not, till he had brought him to ſound humbling of ſoule. It ſhewes us what our nature is, in this behalfe. We are like to light Corke, which will floate aloft, and (except a man hold it under by ſtrong hand) will pearke up to the top. When we are downe and low, one would thinke it ſhould be a great worke to raiſe us up to any cheere againe. But no ſooner is the ſtone blown upon, by a little puffe of winde (although it have been ſteept in water a whole night) but it waxes dry againe preſently, as if never wetted. The hard and ſtony heart of proud man can never ſufficiently be battered, and tamed; but it wil returne to her courſe againe inſtantly. And the truth is, the dayes we live in have a peculiar diſeaſe in this kinde, above former dayes: Gods wrath revenging our former contempt of his law and terrors of conſcience, and our dallying with them, and ſhaking them off, through a baſe heart, weary of trouble. To be abaſed and low when and while the Lord will have us ſo, for our own good and to think well of it, is a rare grace: We are a kin to *Ionah*, who was no ſooner out of the Whales belly but (contrary to vow and covenant) pearkes up again preſently, and quarrells with God, for converting Ninivee: and for his ſlaine gourd: and no wiſedome would charme his folly. So *Hezekiah*, after the like recovery of the plague, and promiſe of humble carriage, yet inſtantly bubbles up againe, upon the comming of the Embaſſadours. If this be done by the greene tree, what is to be looked for in the dry? What wonder then if *Naaman* may ſo ill be truſted with a cure at firſt, under hope of humbling afterward? No, the Lord will hold him while he hath him, and treads upon his heele ſtill with new affronts to keep him at that bay till hee have throughly caſt out his ſcurfe. It is the Lords courſe to doe his worke ſubſtantially and throughly: hee will not ſuſtaine any diſhonour in his owne, that he hath built them by halfes: As for hypocrites, they flye before they are halfe feathered, and can doe him no diſcredit. Hence it is that the Lord hath been faine to prolong affliction and abaſement upon his ſervants: that others beholding them might ſuſpect themſelves. It might ſeeme elſe a ſuperfluous thing to adde water to the ſea: and ſo long croſſes to *Iob*, a man already truly humble, and fearing God. But, as *Paul* ſpeakes of Gods grace towards him, that it was for the example of more then himſelfe: ſo was *Iobs* humbling, a paterne for all men to behold their owne baſe heart in this kinde, and what an hidden depth of ſcurfe is in the chinkes and corners of it.

The laſt meditation.

Proud nature of man quickly forgets humiliation.

Theſe dayes eſpecially, and why?

Jona 3. and 4.

2 Chron 32. 25.

God makes cleare way before him.

Job 1. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 16.

2 Kings

Simile.

2 Kings 2.

Pſal. 51.

Word workes little without afflictions in our times.

Uſe of the point.

Walke heavily under the miſery of a ſlight giddy heart.

Charity is good.

Heb. 12.7. 1 Tim. 5.11.

But yet too much credulity not meet for Gods people.

Verily, in theſe dayes, he or ſhe may be as wonders and ſtrange ſights, who walk duly (in the ſenſe of paſt and preſent corruption) before God with humbleneſſe, and privitie to themſelves: As the ſive holds water while it is in the water, and no longer; ſo doth our proud heart ſtoop while the yoke is upon us: But few ſubdue their hearts to this ſafe demeanure daily. That if another man ſhould come and tell them, Friend, me thinkes your ſpirit is very light and inconſtant, not ſwayed to humbleneſſe: he might anſwere with *Eliſha*, I know it, hold your peace: for, I bleſſe God, I am under the aw of Gods greatneſſe, and my baſe heart, is ever before me: I walke continually in a jealouſie of my proud and fickle ſpirit in this kinde! How few are there now-a-dayes caſt downe by the Word alone, without ſome powerfull addition of afflictions, to ſet the Word on working? When the Lord hath cut the veines, and let out ſome ranke bloud by the Law, how is he faine to ſet men in an hot bath of ſome other croſſe, to keep theſe veines in bleeding? So that except God keep us very low and bare, ſo ranke we are, that we fall into a Pleuriſie againe inſtantly.

The uſe we ſhould make of this branch, is briefly this; Firſt, that wee walke heavily under this body of death in us. Counting the ſame our heavie burden: mourning bitterly that our baſe ſpirits ſhould be ſo weary of Gods yoke, ſo light, ſo frothy and inconſtant! Oh (ſhould wee ſay) who hath more cauſe to walke humbly before God every houre then I? (being guilty of ſo many rebellions, ſo deep-died, of ſo long continuance, hardly waſht out, ſo canker-fretted) and yet (Lord help me) my teares are as the morning dew, & my ſpirit more fethery and giddy then any mans! So prone to relapſe to my old humours, and to forget the ſorrow which my ſinnes coſt me, and all the vowes of humbleſſe and a broken hearted carriage! Truely this diſeaſe cauſeth a good ſoule to walke uncomfortably, and the very beſt graces of God to affoord leſſe ſavour and comfort!

And ſecondly it ſhould teach us all, eſpecially Gods Miniſters, not to be over-forward, to reſt ſecure of our childrens eſtate, or of others, who at firſt gave good hope of true humiliation under the Law; let us charitably hope the beſt of all: But yet let us eate ſome ſalt with them, and wait ſome time to ſee what fruits will come of it, whether they wax not weary, Heb. 12. of Gods chaſtening, and like thoſe widowes who waxed wanton againſt Chriſt, and weary of Church-ſervice, returning to their old vanities, being dead while they were alive. Particularly obſerve, whether the Law be as welcome to them ſtill as at firſt; how they brook the diſcipline of ſuch a School-maſter, that they might get downe their baſe hearts, and keep them under. Mark them, whether the pride of their ſpirit, opinion of themſelves, jollity of the world, warmth of their owne feathers, and pride of life, cauſe them not to forget their former humblings, as if now they had learned a new leſſon, to bee leſſe preciſe, and more wiſe. If we ſee ſuch ſtuffe in them, wee ſhall have little cauſe to repent that we ſuſpected their beginnings.

And laſtly, for our ſelves, count we it the onely ſafe eſtate, & that which promiſeth ſoundeſt comfort, moſt peace, beſt ſafety, and ſweeteſt feelings of Chriſt, when our hearts are kept within the bounds of feare and humility, and awfulneſſe: And, deſire the Lord not to truſt us over farre, nor

eave

leave us long without ſome wholeſome Items and buffetings, rather then we ſhould wax looſe, and run out of his bleſſing into our owne warme Sunne. Bleſſed is hee that feareth alway, and if God croſſeth him not, croſſeth himſelfe. And ſo much alſo for this third branch, and this firſt obſervation.

The ſecond obſervation out of this tenth verſe.

Now I come to the ſecond, the Meſſage is, *Waſh ſeven times in Iordan, and thou ſhalt be cleane.* Touching theſe words, as they contain a charge, and a promiſe annexed, I ſhall ſpeake more at large when I come to handle *Naamans* obedience in the verſes following: Here I onely touch a point or two generally, flowing from the words: and firſt, the meane which God appointed him to uſe for his cure: to wit, the waſhing ſeven times in Jordan.

Queſt.

Ere I come to this point, a Papiſt, or Maſter of ſuperſtition, would here make a ſtop (as a traveller at a croſſe in the high way) and pick out a myſtery out of the number of ſeven. Why ſeven times, ſaith a Papiſt, and not twice, or five times? There is ſurely ſome religion in this period, and ſome myſtery to be obſerved in it.

Anſw.

I anſwer: I know none except (perhaps) the Lord would have *Naaman* acquainted with the ceremonies of the lepers clenſings: which yet I dare not affirm: for then he might have ſent him rather to the Prieſt at Jeruſalem; then, to an extraordinary Prophet, raiſed up in the abſence of the ordinary Prieſt, which now was expelled from the ten Tribes. Therefore rather I anſwer: That ſo it pleaſed the Lord to have it, and the queſtion might as well be made of any other period of number, 3.4.5. as this of 7. Onely Popiſh ſuperſtition thinkes, it hath never made her noſe cleane, ſave when it hath forced blood by wringing it too hard. Forſooth they looke after myſteries in each corner and verſe of the Scriptures: and this period of ſeven, is a very pretious number with them, and hath a great deal of holineſſe in it. They ſay the holy Ghoſt uſeth it ordinarily, both when he would determine an uncertaine number of many, by a certaine, (as ſeven ſpirits for many, ſeven abominations for many:) and alſo when hee would ſet downe a voluntary period, then he names ſeven: as *Eliſha* bids his ſervant goe looke upon the sky ſeven times, the Lord bids *Ioſhua* compaſſe Jerico ſeven times: And it is true, if in that reſpect they hold it a ſacred number, as uſed much by the holy Ghoſt, I agree with them: and I thinke the holy Ghoſt doth the rather uſe it becauſe it is a modell and determining of the workes and reſt of God after the creation of the world, the circle whereof, being the period of ſeven, hath in likelihood occaſioned this period of ſeven, to become a ſtile of numbring with the holy Ghoſt: yet when the ſeventh day was ſanctified, we reade not that the number was. I paſſe by the favour which this number hath with Arithmeticians, for the commodiouſneſſe and previledge of computation. But, as for eſteeming of this number of ſeven, to have any more holineſſe in it, then other numbers, it is ridiculous and ſuperſtitious. They muſt have their ſeven ſacraments for religion ſake, and their ſeven fold exorciſme and adjuration of Divells, their ſeven Ave Maries, their ſeven degrees of Angels, ſeven penitentiall Pſalmes, and in a word, whereſoever they goe, they goe by ſevens. Seven deadly ſinnes they will have, and ſeven contrary vertues, and ſeven ſteps to perfections, as if they might go

Levit. 14. 8. &c.

See 2 Cro. 16. 3. 4.

Mat. 12.

1 King 18. 43.

Iſa 6. 3. 4.

The number of 7. a great fancy with Papiſts.

Number of 7. no holier then other numbers.

2 Kings

to heaven by a ladder, of ſeven ſtaires. This number hath done them ſome pleaſure, for elſe they would (no doubt) have proceeded to ſeven-ſcore ſacraments as well as to ſeven. And ſeeing this number is more pretious to them then Gods two, it is ſtrange that they dip not the infant ſeven times inſtead of three, counting it more holy then the Trinity! we abhorre them, and all their ſuperſtitious fopperies, and myſteries, more fit for inchanters and ſorcerers to worke by, then ſuch as goe to worke on Gods name, by the power of a word, and ordinance.

See Joaſh his reproofe, 2 King 13. 19

The holy Ghoſt tyes not himſelfe to this number (as oft as he uſes it) but uſeth all other numbers as occaſion offers it ſelfe indifferently. As for *Naaman* here, if the number of ſeven ſerves to teach any thing, it teacheth the depth of infection in his body (and much more in his ſpirit) which needed ſuch frequeut waſhing one after another, and all too little. But as for any holineſſe in the number, (as ſeven) otherwiſe then the charge of God exactly required, we put none at all, in it. We leave that ſuperſtitious holineſſe, to them, who turned religion it ſelfe into a maſſe of ſuperſtitious, judaicall, phariſaicall, heatheniſh, and ſorcerous vanities: The true ſucceſſors of Phariſees, (as our Saviour tells us) That they put Gods ſervice in waſhing, pots, and platters, diſhes and trenchers, and ſundry other toyes, deſtroying ſubſtance for circumſtance: even ſo do theſe: They place religion in old ſlippers, ſhooes, bootes and buskins, rotten chips, rotten garments: in Crucifixes, Images, and ruſty reliques: and ſo in numbers: yea, as the Phariſees would have the moſt holy ſacrifices, and Temple of God to borrow their holineſſe from the gold of the Temple, and the altar of ſacrifice, ſo do theſe. Forſooth, the moſt holy Ordinance of preaching, prayer, ſacraments (if theſe Phariſees may bee beleeved) muſt be holy, becauſe offered upon their altar or ſuperaltar, becauſe made, ſaid, or done in, and upon their conſecrated Temples, Pulpits, or Maſſe altars! Oh ye fooles! whether is the more holy! the gold or the Temple! the altar or ſacrifice! the Pulpit, or the ſolemne ordinance of preaching! the Church, or the praier offered up? A ſeparation of place, we acknowledge, to be meet, and fit, from common uſe, for Gods: but, for inherent holineſſe in it, we abhor, and renounce. To conclude, let us cleave to naked Scripture, and not fancy to our ſelves a *Samuel*, whereſoever we ſee an old man, in a mantle, nor a myſtery, where there is no ſuch matter, and, ſo leave the ſimplicity of truth, for a novelty of ſuperſtition. Ever ſince ſuch ſcurfe tooke place in the Church, ſubſtance decayed: as the dog loſt his fleſh for the ſhadow: ſuch ſhells coſt more the cracking, then all the kirnell is worth. The more we cleave to the ſacred, and pure truth of God, the more we ſhall abhorre all ſuch fooleries. Give me one ſacrament of Chriſts inſtitution, and let them take the ſeven: One prayer made in faith, and let them take their 7. Ave-maries: one croſſe, and the power of one Chriſt, and they, their ſeven croſſings, and rowes of Beads. And ſo much (if not too much) for this number of ſeaven.

Mat. 23. 16. 17

The meſſage it ſelfe.

The meſſage it ſelfe followeth. *Naaman* looked to be cured by great *Eliſha* that worthy Prophet: but the remedy which God makes uſe of, is the waſhing of his fleſh in Jorden ſeven times. A poore thing (one would thinke) to compaſſe ſuch a great effect. But ſo it is, commonly the Lord

effect

2 Kings

effects thoſe things which are of greateſt conſequence, by poore and ſeely meanes, ſuch as the world would thinke moſt unlikely and contemptible. Commonly I ſay, ſo it is: I ſay not alway. For ſometimes, the Lord chuſeth great ones, and wiſe ones, and learned, and valourous, and experienced, and in great eſteem, to be his inſtruments: becauſe he will be knowne in his owne gifts, leſt they ſhould not be eſteemed: But when it is thus, commonly the Lord ſhewes as great power in making ſuch inſtruments great, being of themſelves before meane or deſpiſed: at leaſt he brings them low in their owne eyes, and makes them rare patternes of humbleneſſe, before he dare uſe them. *Eſter* was a great woman and effected a great deliverance: But ſhe was made ſo of a poore captive, ſo that ſtill God was as manifeſt in her, another way. So *David*, yet made of a poore ſhepheard and therefore a mirror of as great providence. *Ioſia* effected great things: but how? Not by his greatneſſe, but by his extraordinary grace of melting and humbleneſſe. And ſo many Preachers perhaps are uſed to doe God ſome glory: But if compariſon be made (not betweene them and other of meaner gifts, but betweene them and the effects of converſion) what is a baſe ſinfull man with all his complements to God? and put caſe that ſometime the Lord doe uſe ſome men of great eſteeme with ſome carnall perſons for their excellent parts, the better to winne their great ſtomackes to like of his truth: yet this commonly is but a generall preparative to their converſion: for the Lord will ſtrike the maine ſtroke afterward, rather by ſome other inſtrument of meaner worth. All the Scriptures doe with one conſent beare witneſſe hereof, both in doctrine and examples. Our Lord Jeſus his worke of ſalvation was the greateſt worke that ever was done in the world. And who was he that did it? I confeſſe in himſelfe, the wiſedome of God and the power of God: but in the eyes of the world moſt baſe, the ſtumbling-blocke of the Jew, and fooliſhneſſe to the Gentile. By a ſonne of a poore woman, not an Empreſſe, one borne in a ſtable and a cratch, not in a Palace: one that had not an hole to hide himſelfe in: one that rode upon an Aſſe, and had a few ſilly men and women cry Hoſanna to him: who dyed as a malefactor upon a Croſſe, the moſt curſed death of all other: By him the Lord effects this great worke. Not that hee could not have uſed greater preparations, but ſo it pleaſed him even to make him the corner ſtone, whom the builders refuſed. So the Apoſtles were uſed to preach Chriſt in the world, to ſubdue and conquer it all to himſelf: who were they? No men of great breed, birth, training or learning, but poore Fiſher-men, utterly unlearned. So *Paul*, a poore creature in ſhew, a poore withered branch, a man that affected no quaint phraſe, no elocution, but was weak in ſpeech, is uſed to do more then any of the reſt. See 1 Cor. 1. Yee know brethren, your calling, how that not many learned, noble, or rich, but the mean things of this world, hath the Lord choſen. What is a greater worke then converſion and calling? And who are greater and more pretious objects then the called? Who honour God more then ſuch as beare his image, and are partakers of his Divine Nature. Now if God ſhould chuſe great ones, and jolly, wiſe and politick ones to ſuch ends, he ſhould confute this point; but he uſeth the pooreſt (as Saint *Iames* ſaith) and moſt baſe offall of this world to bee heires

God uſeth to effect ſolemne things, by ſeely means.

Eſters hiſt. cap. 2. 3. 7. 8. &c.
1 Sam. 16. 12. 13. 14.
2 Cron. 34. 35. &c.

If God uſe great ones, either he makes them great of mean ones, or mean of great ones.

Eſay 53.
1 Cor. 1. 20.

Luke 5.

1 Cor. 3.

2 Kings

heires of ſalvation? That ſo when his excellency ſhines through the elements of their baſeneſſe, the glory may bee his owne.

Reaſon 1.

Reaſons of the point are many. Firſt the Lord delights in caſting down and treading under feet all the pride of fleſh, and conceit of man, in beeing inſtrumentall to his worke. So ſaith *Paul*, 1 Cor. 1. Where is the Scribe? where is the Law interpreter? where is the wiſe? God hath confounded the great things of the world, by his owne ſeely things. No wiſe man or Artiſt hath ſuch delight to diſcover and ſhame a proud Mountebanke and emperick, as the Lord hath to confound a proud perſon who thruſts himſelf into his ſolemne buſineſſe. He ſcattereth the wiſe in the imaginations of their owne heart. And the Lord knoweth the wiſedome of the wiſe, that it is but folly. The weakneſſe of God is ſtronger then man: and the fooliſhneſſe of God is wiſer then man: and therefore by his weakneſſe and folly he delights to controll the ſtrength and wiſdome of man. Thoſe falſe Apoſtles gloried much in their parts, and ſpeech, and skill: But the Lord choſe poor *Paul* with his weakneſſe to do more good in the point of converſion, then all of them. They made a great boaſt to man ward, and who but they? But the Lord laught them to ſcorne and all their complements, as enemies to the grace of Chriſt: and they who could diſcerne, at length perceived all their ſcope to be the ſetting up that trinity, of Belly, Ambition, and Covetouſneſſe, Phil. 3.18. and, ſo beeing diſcovered, they vaniſht in the opinion of the Church as ſmoke.

God delights to confute great things by ſeely.

Reaſon 2.

God is very jealous of his glory.

Joſh. 6.

Judg...

Seeondly, the Lord is very jealous leaſt hee ſhould loſe any honour through the glorious ſhewes and ſhaddowes of humane oſtentation, ſtrength or ſufficiency. When he gave Jerico into *Joſuas* hand, he was very jealous leaſt Iſrael ſhould aſcribe too much to themſelves, and therefore befooled all their great courage and ſtrength with a march about the City, and blowing with trumpets of Rams-horns, and thereby the City walls fell downe proſtrate on the earth. Theſe could rob God of no honour, they were ſafe inſtruments to uſe: when Gedeon had a compleate number of ſouldiers ready for the battell, they were an eye ſore to the Lord: he thought he ſhould be a loſer in point of honour: and therefore he told him he ſhould abandon all the reſt of the Army: and of thoſe of the Army (being yet too many) he would trie who would lap water as a dog, and who would take it into their hand to drinke: theſe latter, being many he ſent away, and the former being but three hundred he would uſe to get the victory. The reaſon was, becauſe by them (as no way proportionable to ſuch an effect) he could feare no treacherous robbing of his honour. So true is that Eſay 42. My glory, is as my ſelfe, deare to me, I will not loſe it upon any tearms, nor give it to another.

Reaſon 3.

We are prone to Idolize means.

Jer. 2. 13.

Thirdly, the Lord knowes that we are prone to Idolize the meanes more or leſſe, and to forſake him for our broken pits. For, either, wee will beleeve no effect further then we ſee meanes for it; or if we doe not ſo, yet we cleave too much to meanes: or if we ſet up God above them yet we would tie him to bleſſe them without faile. Touching the firſt of theſe, we naturally goe to worke, and weigh things in the ballances of our owne reaſon, and what they will afford we will yeeld the Lord, but no more: This age we live in, excells in this carnall eſteeme of inſtruments, parts and abilities of men, and ſmoother of all divine worke under

And that three waies. The firſt.

theſe

theſe feathers. As *Samuel* propoſitioned *Eliab* to a Crowne at firſt ſight. When great exploits bee done by ſuch as are brave and jolly fellowes, men wonder not, but ſay, Yea, he was a brave man indeed: It troubles our baſe eyes to looke beyond that which is next us, and to ſee God in ſuch effects. As ſilver anſweres all things in price, ſo ſtrength and parts anſweres all effects in efficacie and working, and ſo God is thruſt out of doores. As in a Market men lay downe money, and take ware, ſo in this Market of worldly wiſedome, men thinke to effect any thing if they bring powder and ſhot to the battery. The Lord therefore ſubſtitutes ſeely inſtruments in ſtead thereof, and when mighty effects follow, then is his might magnified. 2 Kings

For the ſecond, though wee deny not but the Lord is chiefe, yet ſtill we look at meanes, and thinke God workes by them, and why ſhould wee not therefore embrace them? Our baſe hearts fall ſhort of God through lazineſſe and diſtruſt, as well as by Atheiſme. And therefore even here alſo God layes a block in our way, to ſtumble at, and breake our ſhinnes, to teach us to behold God more cloſly in the uſe of meanes, both in matters of the World, and of the Word: he puts us off from our *Eliſha*, and ſends us to waſh in Jorden. The 2.

Thirdly, if we goe a little further, and ſet God up in his place above the meanes, yet we take it for granted, he muſt not faile us: wee will tye him to over-rule, and work by the meanes: and thinke much if God ſatiſfie us not accordingly. Whereas wee ſhould ſo look at God, as an abſolute ſoveraigne Agent, who can work or not work by them, above them, againſt them, without them. The 3.

Now I come to the uſe. And firſt this is inſtruction in ſundry kindes: Firſt, to teach us why the Lord hath ſo ſtript our land and kingdome of ſo many worthy Lights and Inſtruments as he hath done; ſome by death, ſome by baniſhment, others in warre, others by other violence: why hee hath ſo ſtript and bared us of many both in civill and Eccleſiaſticall ſtate; Surely, becauſe we applauded our ſelves too much in their policie, their wiſedome, their learning, experience and ſufficiencie. We have not looked upon God, in their gifts, zeale and labours: wee have magnified our ſelves in our ſtore, and proviſion, as if we ſhould never be deſolate: as Tyrus did pride her ſelf in her ſtore of Jewels and pretious ſtones: & as Babel ſate like a Queen, and ſaid, ſhe ſhould never ſee ſorrow, and therefore was ſuddenly brought downe: and as Jeruſalem thought her ſelfe the holy Mountaine and Citie of God; the mirror of the world, having the Ark of Gods preſence, his Temple and Prieſts, his Ordinances and Prophets, his Word and Oracles, therefore, *Lam.* 1. ſhee came downe wonderfully. Even ſo hath it been with us. No ſooner hath the Lord planted in any place a faithfull Miniſter, as a ſhining Light, and burning Candle, but the people have fallen to idolize him, to rejoyce in his out-ſide, to thinke themſelves ſafe and happy in enjoying ſuch Inſtruments: aſcribing all the effect of his labours to him, little acknowledging the finger of God, or the office which hee ſuſtaines; not honouring him for the worke ſake which hee ſerves for, to reconcile them to God, to beget them to a lively hope by the Goſpell. This baſeneſſe of our fleſhly reſpects, hath cauſed the Lord to rob us of them, and to ſet mean ones in their roomes: To teach

Vſes 1. Inſtruct. Branch 1.

Wee have loſt many worthy inſtruments, becauſe wee aſcribed too much unto them.

See Ezek. cap. 26. 27. and 28. verſe 13. Jer. 51. 53. Lam. 1. 9. John 5 35.

2 Kings

teach men to lay to heart their former carnall ends. How many have received Prophets to farre other ends then the Lord ever ſent them? To make them as tearmes of compariſon between perſon and perſon, ſome to hold upon *Apollo*, ſome *Cephas*, ſome *Paul*, ſome others. To cenſure, to jangle, and ſome to bring themſelves and Townes into ſome credit in the countrey: others to get good cuſtome for their wares and ſhops: others to make themſelves wel reputed & praiſed for their forwardneſſe and zeal in profeſſion: whereas yet, alas! the meanes being gone, and the ſive taken out of the water, they have proved as meere formall time-ſervers, and as ignorant of their grounds, as they who never made ſhew at all. Others have ſecurely reſted in their labours, never looking for any change of heart thereby, but thinking the Prophets ſhall live for ever: and when they are gone, fretting at their preciſeneſſe of conſcience, and unthankfully leaving them to ſink or ſwim, and ſhift as they can. Is this (beloved) to honour God in his ordinance? to cleave cloſe to it, as (under God) the mean of converſion? Is this to count their feet beautifull, and to adore the Lord in the varietie of his gifts and inſtruments? No, no: and therefore the Lord hath been fain to take them out of the way, and leave us to our ſelves: ſo that our ſupply was never ſo great as our defeat is ſtrange. All to teach us to looke at the ſimplicitie of Gods ends, to ſerve God firſt, and man with his leavings: let the Lord have the heart: ſet him up there, in ſelfe-denial, humility, faith, ſincerity and faithfulneſſe: and then let the inſtrument have the over-plus, that honour and countenance which belongs to him for his ſervice. For God counts not himſelfe robbed by that eſteeme wherein we have his Miniſter under himſelfe, but that which he hath above himſelfe. And ſurely it is not for nothing, that the renowned King (lately ſlaine) in the heat of his warres, oft ſpake a little before his death, that the Lord would not long ſuffer him to live, becauſe the people made him ſuch an Idoll, and robbed God of his due, to magnifie him. Papiſts worſhip a dead blocke for want of knowledge, and we a living one for lacke of faith: the one for a little carving and workmanſhip of gold and ſilver: the other for a little varniſh of gifts or excellencie or parts: the one from man, the other from God, but both idolatrous; becauſe againſt the honour of the giver.

1 Cor. 3. 3. 4.

Rom. 10. 15.

King of Sweden.

Another branch of inſtruction is, to teach us why the Lord doth ſo defeat men of their purpoſes and projects, which they frame to themſelves, when they goe to worke upon their owne heads, in matters of God. We have ſeen it with our eyes verified, which *Salomon* ſpeakes, That victory is not alway with the ſtrong, nor race with the ſwift, nor wealth to the provident, nor eſteeme to the vain-glorious, nor ſpirituall ſucceſſe to the Miniſter, though learned and rarely qualified, becauſe men have boaſted of their ſtrength, ſwiftneſſe, policie, experience, providence, and abilities, more then the Lord. I am witneſſe my ſelfe of ſome ſad events in this kinde, that men have ſpent themſelves in their ſtudie, to perfect ſome ſpeciall diſcourſe and Maſter-peece of their owne braine, either to beare downe the truth, and broach ſchiſmaticall points: or to win the ſpurres, and get themſelves the eternall repute of learned perſons; or ſome vaine applauſe of fantaſticke auditors (as if they ſought a plaudite) upon the ſtage (a baſe prophaneneſſe both in them that ſeek it, and them that

Branch 2. Inſtruction.

Eccleſ. 9. 11.

2 Kings

that offer it.) But the Lord hath ſo reſiſted their pride, and ſtruck off their wheeles, brought them to ſuch a reproachfull non-plus before all their auditors, that they have verified the ſpeech, God reſiſteth the proud: and ſome of them have got more grace, when they became more humble: Oh! what a terror it ſhould be to all ſuch as dare affront God in his owne element, and covet to honour themſelves with that, which they ſacrilegiouſly have ſtollen from God! If the Lord loath it in a meere politicke Atheiſt, and in an heathen, the one affecting the glory, the other defiling the veſſels of God, *Herod* I mean, and *Belſhazzar*: both which were fearfully plagued: If (I ſay) this were done in the green tree, what ſhall bee done in the dry? how ſhall they eſcape who with more impudence and reſiſtance of light, ſhall dare God to his face?

Jam. 4. 6.

Dan. 5. 5. Act. 12. 23.

A third branch of inſtruction is, concerning the wiſedome of God in his ordinances. Wonder we not why the Lord ſhould chuſe ſuch poor and ſeely meanes and inſtruments, for the effecting ſo incomparable events, of humbling of the ſoule, and converting it to God, as hee hath done. To ſpeake of ſome perſonall inſtruments firſt, may it not be wondred at, that the Lord ſhould worke by ſuch poore, yea contrary meanes to reaſon as he hath done in caſting downe the throne of Antichriſt, and rearing up the kingdome of the Lord Jeſus? By poore *Luther*, a deſpiſed Monke, to convince a great part of Europe of their many hundreth yeares error, and to bring in by degrees, the light of the Goſpel into ſo many nations, making the very pillars of Popery to ſhake, and the foundations to tremble? By ſuch a poore ſeely creature as *William Tindall*, to ſubdue our poore Engliſh Nation to the knowledge of Chriſt? By a Prince who both in practice and writing profeſſed himſelfe the Defender of Popiſh faith (and ſate in perſon upon the lives of ſome of Chriſts Martyrs, ſhedding their bloud to ſatisfie that Whore) to doe a worke, which if many Princes together had joyned to doe, had been unlike to be accompliſhed, that is, to caſt out the Pope out of his free-hold and poſſeſſions throughout the land: were not theſe great things, are they not the Lords workes, and marvellous in our eyes? By our *Ioſiah*, a childe of ſeven yeares old, afterward to ſettle the Goſpel throughout the Dominion, abandoning the refuſe and taile that remained? By what meanes ſince *Luther*, theſe ſixe ſcore yeares, hath the Goſpel been ſupported? and that againſt the gates of hell, and the policies of Papiſts every day more and more increaſing, and recovering the wound which they received? Surely, even by poore ſeely inſtruments, which God raiſed up in ſundry Nations, armed onely by the weapons of a ſpirituall warfare: that the glory might be Gods. As *Zachar.* 4. the Lord ſpeakes of thoſe two great Olives, *Iehoſhua* and *Zerubbabel*, deſpiſed men, crope out of captivity, aſſiſted with a poore multitude of captives, in the midſt of moſt potent enemies: that even theſe two ſhould reſtore the ruines Jeruſalem, both the Civill and Eccleſiaſticke ſtate, though to man-ward there were no ſtrength in them: yet by my Spirit and my ſtrength, ſaith the Lord, even as the two Olives dropped oyle without any helpe or Art of man, into the Lamps ſet under them by divine providence. And touching the Ordinances, what were the authority of a ſinfull man of like paſſions to us, toward the ſubduing of the conſcience of rebels and traitors, and converting them

3 Branch. Inſtruct. Wonder not why God chuſeth ſeely inſtruments.

2 Kings

them to God? What ſtrength of the greateſt warriors, or Rhetoricke of Orators, or wit of Politicians could come neere it? Onely the Lord hath choſen ſuch poore conduits, and conveyances, that his own glory might ſuſtaine no prejudice by mens leaving the Lord, and committing idolatry with the meanes? Why hath he cloathed his Sacraments ſo poorly, and allowed us no ſumptuous pomp and bravery in them, ſave to deliver us from a Carnall, and to recover us to a Spirituall worſhip? As if a jealous man over an unchaſte Spouſe, ſhould purpoſely receive no ſervants into his houſe ſave meanly bred, baſe and deformed, that ſo hee might remove all colour and pretence from her, to fall in love with any ſave himſelfe? What is ſo ordinary as to heare a poore man utter a few words? or ſee him powre out a little wine, or offer a morſell of bread? No voice being heard, no ſight to be ſeen beſides? Yea, why is it, that all furniture of Jewiſh Temple, Altars, Worſhip, thoſe Ordinances of outward ſolemnity, the Ephod, the Garments, Gold and pretious ſtones, thoſe carnall wayes of viſions, dreames, apparitions, miracles, and fire from heaven, are all turned into one way, Heb. 1. 1. more ſpirituall, that is Chriſt preached by men? Surely that the Spirit convoy'd by them, might appeare to be from God, and not man. But of this read more in my former Treatiſe of Sacraments.

Heb. 1. 1.

Object. Then pull downe Arts and Sciences.

Ere I come to any further uſe, here is an objection offers it ſelfe: viz. If God uſe ſo mean things to do the greateſt workes: Then (may ſome ſay) it may ſeeme, the meaner and ſillier the perſons bee, the fitter they are for God to uſe and honour himſelfe by: and then, why pull wee not downe Students, learned men in Tongues and Arts, and ſet up Tradeſmen in their roomes?

Anſw. No.

To which I anſwer: No. The Church of God hath alway joyned the porch of the Schoole to the Church, and drawne thence into her ſervice men ſufficiently qualified for all knowledge, and parts meet for the Miniſtery. When the Maſter leads the hand of a Boy to write, the leſſe the Boy moves of himſelfe, the meeter he is to grace the skill of the leader. But if any ſhould inferre hereupon, that the Boy were better want an hand altogether; who would not ſay, this were a ridiculous conſequence? It muſt bee preſuppoſed, that hee who is not qualified with gifts to teach, is no organ or hand at all for the Lord to make uſe of. *Amos* was an Heard-man, and in that reſpect meane enough: yet withall exceedingly qualified by extraordinary inſpiration: ſo the Apoſtles unlearned, and men of trade, howbeit very admirably gifted for the Miniſtery. Otherwiſe they had been no inſtruments of any honour to God at all, but rather of great reproach, as if God ſhould appoint men for the greateſt uſes, and not be able to qualifie them with gifts conducing thereto. Even ſo now, Arts and Studies are come in the ſtead of extraordinary inſpirings: If men ſhould want the furniture thereof, how ſhould they interpret the Scriptures, order their ſpeech, utter their minde, perſwade the hearer? The grace of the Spirit runnes in theſe as in a ſtream. But my meaning is, that men of like infirmities with others, mean perhaps for breed, for other carnall endowments, policie, greatneſſe in the world, yet the Lord having qualified them with abilities of wiſedome, grace, and poverty of ſpirit, uſeth them (as mean as they are) to his owne greateſt ends, converſion, I meane, and edification of ſoules. Though in other

other outward reſpects they promiſe little, yet the Lord workes great matters by them: Or if they have other complements of authority in carriage, awfulneſſe, experience and wiſedome in the world; yet being humble alſo, and abhorring pride, ſtate and jollitie (as all Gods Miniſters ought to do) they are mean in the eye of the world (whatſoever inward excellencies they have) for the world eſteems them ſo much, as they eſteem themſelves by the greatneſſe of their ſtomacke. Now it is not their skill & knowledge which can hinder their humbleneſſe in their own eyes: no more then ignorance can cauſe humilitie. Nay, I dare ſay, that if the number of proud ones were ſurveyed, we ſhall finde more of them proud through ignorance, and for lack of a bottome, then of their knowledge: though neither (without ſpeciall grace) can be humble. As then I would have none miſtake me in this point, ſo by the way, I would admoniſh all bold, ignorant and raw novices, and young Miniſters (of whom the world is full) who no ſooner are crept out of the ſhell, but thinke themſelves fit enough for the Miniſtery (being yet wholly untrain'd in the way thereof, and very prone to fall into the condemnation of the Divell:) I doe admoniſh all ſuch to looke to themſelves: and beware leſt through a pearking and ventrous ſpirit, and a deſire after their owne ends, gaine and living, they diſhonour God, bring his ordinances into contempt, and by their running and ſhifting from place to place for meanes, they ſnare their conſciences ſo farre, that they can ſcarce get out againe when they would. Runnagate, idle, unlearned Curates and Hirelings, are a great bane to the Church. Let them wait the time, attend to reading, deny themſelves, learne of their betters and ancients (which few of them doe) and truſt God in due time for ſervice and reſpect in the Church.

2 Kings

Gifts and graces doe no more cauſe pride, then ignorance cauſeth humility.

Further, this point ſhould mainiſter exceeding conſolation to poore ones, in their owne eyes, and ſilly and contemptible in the eyes of the world (as indeed never was there a more ſcornfull age of thoſe who are truly religious at the beſt, but eſpecially if they want parts, wealth, breed, learning to commend them) Oh! God doth great things in poore ones, by poore ones, for poore ones. If the Lord hath humbled you truly, and made you wiſe to ſalvation, rejoyce, although perhaps you are counted but poore politicians, poore worldlings, though perhaps your learning be not deep, and a ſubtile fellow may circumvent your ſimplicity in a bargaine: Oh! let not this diſcourage you. For the Lord oft doth as much good to a poore creature, by the want of ſome exceſſe of worldly wiſedome, as hee loſes eſteeme by it among men. The Lord chuſeth ſuch (often) to be heires of ſalvation: and their oppoſition to grace, is commonly (cõmonly I ſay, for ſomtimes the moſt ſilly are the moſt perverſe) a great deale leſſe then theirs who are more deeply wiſe, who frame to themſelves many objections, and ſtumble at many offences. As theſe poore ones have not the reach which many have, nor the depth, ſo neither do they meet with ſuch reall lets from within. Alas! they are not ſo curious, ſo proud, ſelfe-loving, but they are glad to ſtoop to the conditions of the Goſpell: they have little within them to caſt downe, and little without them to forfet, they are little ones in underſtanding, wealth, honour and reputation, and therefore they are fit to make Gods little ones: They are glad to be accepted of God, they are loſt to the world, they

Vſe 2. Conſolation to deſpiſed ones in the eyes of men.

James 2.5.

2 Kings

ſtinke before great ones, therefore if God will eſteeme them, they are thankfull, their hearts are low, broken and ready to wonder that the Lord ſhould caſt an eye of reſpect to ſuch. Therefore Matth. 11. the poore ſoon receive the Goſpell. Oh! little doe ſuch thinke what rubs the Lord hath taken out of their way! Beſides, when that grace ſhall be ſeen in ſuch ſilly ones, which great and wiſe ones cannot purchaſe with all their wiſedome and learning: when the Lord ſhall make them ſhine in holy example, love and zeale to Gods glory, tender of offending, innocent, humble: nay, when the gifts of rare holy wiſedome, of prayer, conference, judgement and diſcerning of things and perſons ſhall appeare in them, who wonders not how ſuch ſhould come by ſuch gifts? God worketh a great thing by them, when he ordaineth praiſe by ſuch to himſelf. As the Lord Jeſus had no beauty in him, unlearned, and yet ſo able to poſe the Doctors, and to ſtall his moſt potent enemies. And his Diſciples, Acts 4. when they ſtuck ſo to Chriſt, that they daunted the Elders; Oh! how it drew admiration from the people, and glory to God! So *Ioh. 9.* thoſe who had knowne the blinde beggar ſitting by the way, and now heard with what a new tongue he convinced the Phariſees, they glorified God.

Matth. 11. 16. Joh. 7.

That poore Martyr, *Alice Driver*, in the preſence of many hundreds, did ſo ſilence Popiſh Biſhops, that ſhe and all, bleſſed God that the proudeſt of them could not reſiſt the Spirit in a ſilly woman: ſo I ſay to thee, Out of the mouth of Babes and ſucklings will God be honoured. Even thou (ſilly worme) ſhalt honor him, when it ſhall appeare what God hath done for thee, what luſts he hath mortified, and what graces he hath granted thee! which thoſe that are wiſer then thou, fret to ſee in thee! Oh! be thankful! The Lord can yet do greater things for thee, if thou wilt truſt him: he can carry thee upon Eagles wings, enable thee to bear & ſuffer ſtrong affliction for him, to perſevere to the end, to live by faith, and to finiſh thy courſe with joy. Oh! in that he hath made thee low in heart, thy other lowneſſe ſhall be ſo much the more honour to thee! Do not all as much and more wonder at Gods rare workmanſhip in the Ant, the pooreſt bugge that creeps, as in the biggeſt Elephant? That ſo many parts and limbes ſhould be united in ſuch a little ſpace: that ſo poore a creature ſhould provide in the Summer time her Winter food? Who ſees not as much of God in a Bee, as in a greater creature? Alas! in a great body we looke for great abilities and wonder not! Therefore to conclude, ſeeing God hath clothed thy uncomly parts with the more honour, bleſſe God, and beare thy baſeneſſe more equally: thy greateſt glory is yet to come, that when the wiſe of the world have rejected the counſell of God, thou haſt (with thoſe poore Publicanes and Souldiers) magnified the Miniſtery of the Goſpell: ſurely the Lord alſo, 1 Theſſ. 1. will bee admired in thee, a poore ſilly creature, that ever thou wert made wiſe to ſalvation, and beleeveſt in that day! Be ſtill poor in thine owne eyes: and the Lord will make thy proudeſt ſcornfull enemies to worſhip at thy feet, to confeſſe God hath done much for thee, and wiſh thy portion when God ſhall viſit them.

John 1. 50.

Luke 1. 5.

Rev. 3. 9.

Vſe 3. Branch 1. Admonit.

Alſo, it is admonttiou to worldly wiſe ones, to ſuch as commonly carry the repute of learned ones, and the like; That the Lord confuteth wiſe ones by ſimple ones. It ſhould cauſe ſuch to tremble, and ſeeke to bee as little

little in your owne eyes, as they ſeeme great to others. For otherwiſe, thoſe excellent accompliſhments wherein they excell others, may become ſnares: Their priviledge may become their prejudice! A learneder man then any of us could tremble at this meditation; The idiots and fooles riſe up and ſnatch the Kingdome by violence from us, and we with all our learning are thruſt downe to hell. Oh! how ſad is this! Once a Princeſſe beholding a learned Civilian lame of his feet, ſaid, Thy deformity is our great enormity: meaning that he was diſabled to ſtand in her preſence. But when the Lord ſhall ſay to many wiſe and great ones, your excellent parts are my detriment, what a ſad greeting will that be? Oh! it had beene better for me if thou hadſt beene poore, lame, an Idiot, then great and jolly! Surely thou mightſt have honoured me more with meaner gifts, (thine heart being lowly) then with all theſe, thou being ſo proud! The beſt uſe that many put their parts to, being this, to ſtrengthen themſelves and others in their profaneneſſe, luxury, ambition, and tyranny. Oh! therefore, be a foole that thou maiſt be wiſe! Let all thy parts ſtoop, yea be too little for Chriſt, to preach, to profeſſe, to honour him! And bee afraid, leſt (otherwiſe) the Lord ſhall overlooke thee, and ſay, Oh this man was too bigge, too ſtout, too ſtately to beleeve, too great to get through ſuch a ſtrait gate as heaven is! Camels cannot go through needles eyes. Oh pray God to little thee, to pare off thy ſuperfluities! Oh Lord, take out this proud heart of mine, puft up with gifts, experience, skill, wiſdome, Oh cleanſe them all, make me humble, and betruſt me againe with them, and then being ſhaven and waſhed, all ſhall ſerve thee: and I ſhall loſe all my excellency in thy glory: thou ſhalt eclipſe all my parts that my humility may honour thee! My deformity ſhall bee no detriment to thee, but I ſhall give thee the glory in the treading of my beſt readings, arts, skill, elocution, and whatſoever humane perfection, under thy feet. Lord accept me, and doe what thou wilt with me, ſo thou keepe me from all ſacriledge and robbing thee of thy due. To the pure all things ſhall be pure, if thou haſt purged my parts, I ſhall be a veſſell prepared for every good uſe: and as fire and water are good ſervants, but ill maſters, ſo when my ſpirit and ſtreame ſhall be wholly carried in thine, I ſhall be, I may be truſted with thy gifts, to honour the giver.

Wiſe ones muſt become fooles, that they may bee wiſe in Gods matters.

Tit. 1. 15.

2 Tim. 2. 21.

Oh that my words could reach to many Miniſters of worthy parts and endowments! of whom ſome vaniſh in the baſe abuſe of their liberties, the creature of meat and drinke, of recreations and paſtimes, of apparell and faſhions: maintaining themſelves and their wives in pompe and pride of life, to the deſtruction of ſoules! Others fall to exceſſe in drinking, baſe company, lurking in their dens, either in their Colledges, or in the Country; utterly unprofitable Cretians, ſlow bellies, evill beaſts, as that Poet ſaid: filling their panches, and ſurfetting upon pleaſures: Others inſatiable of livings, and ambitious of preferments: Others, ſetting up their gifts above Chriſt, and chuſing to preach ten words without underſtanding, rather then one to the peoples reach! Alas! is this the fruit of your ſtudies and parts, your abilities and gifts, that when you ſhould in humility feed the flock of God, you deſpiſe them and ſet them at naught, and honour your ſelves with Gods ſpoyle! Beware leſt the Lord purſue you, and make you regorge theſe unſavoury morſels of yours with

Caveat to Miniſters not to abuſe their parts to eaſe and pampering of the fleſh

Tit. 1. 12.

1 Pet. 5. 2.

2 Kings

horrour and deteſtation, or elſe revenge himſelfe of you for all your ſacriledge, when there ſhall bee no remedy! Then ſhall you wiſh (as ſome have done) that you had beene as poore and ſilly ones as walke upon the earth, ſo you were free of robbing God of his glory! Greeke, Ebrew, Latine, Fathers, all learning is good: But if it have loſt her ſavour, and be as the oyntment which ſtinkes by dead flyes, what ſhall it be good for? Surely to be caſt into the ſtreets and to be troden upon, yea to bee made the juſt ſcorne of men, who never made conſcience to reſerve to God the entire ſervice of his gifts, but fed and prided themſelves with his colours. *Hophni* and *Phinees* would thruſt their forke into Gods kettle, and ſteal his due: but no ſacrifice could ſatisfie for ſuch ſin, the Lord ſware he would receive no paiment for their ranſomtil he utterly rooted them out! Seek not therfore your ſelves, ſet not up your names and parts to be idolized, ſcorn not thoſe whoſe diligence & pains in the Church exceed yours, learne of them, diſdaine them not. God doth great things by poor means: but ſeldome receives honour from ſuch as ſeeke to get up into their owne ſaddle by Gods ſtirrop: and by their preaching the ſacred truth of God, hoyſe up their owne ſayles, and out-run the Lord by their owne pride; wonder not, nor fret that you loſe the hearts of Gods people, and that they turne from you; for his ſheepe heare his voice, and not the voice of a ſtranger. Alter the property of the unſanctified parts, and let them be devoted to an humble ſervice of his Sanctuary, and then your gold and blue ſilke ſhall be accepted: elſe Goats haire and Badgers skins ſhall bee preferred before you. And to end my counſell, conſider but this, although you ſhould repent before you dye, yet you muſt bee ſaved as it were by fire: God will not ſuffer any of your hay and ſtubble to cleave to his foundation of pearles: This is the beſt of it, your worke muſt burne by the cenſure of Gods purity: but if your worke burne not by your repentance, both your ſelves and your worke too ſhall burne through your impenitency.

Luke 14 34. ult.

1 Sam. 2. 14.

John 10. 27.

Exod. 35. 23.

1 Cor. 3. 13. 15

Vſe 3. Branch 2. Godly Miniſters muſt not onely uſe, but alſo lay downe their parts and ſervices if God ſo require.

Secondly, let me adde one Caveat to ſuch as make conſcience to improve their parts and excellencies to the beſt ends in their Miniſtery and labours! I confeſſe it might beſeeme my ſelfe to learne of ſome of them, yet let me ſpeake one word! Beware (my Brethren) leſt having ſeemed to eſcape a gulfe, ye be drowned in a ſhallow! Renounce even thoſe gifts alſo by which you ſeeme to honour God: reſt not in this that you dare not baſely pride your ſelves in any of your parts above God: but beware of a finer ſpun ſelfe then this: deny your ſelves even the ſecond time (as I may ſay) leſt otherwiſe you fall in love ſo farre with your ſervice, that you grow to thinke God cannot want you. Perhaps God may try you in your onely ſonne *Iſhac*, whether you can be content to want him or no, for God, as well as to enjoy him in God. The onely tryall of the denying of your owne parts for God, is, if when God calls for them in ſacrifice, you be as willing to make ſhipwracke of them, as to improve them. Be not more anxious for God then he is for himſelfe: for he can make the ſtones cry, although you ſhould hold your peace. To ſerve God ſo with your gifts, as to be loth (upon any need) to forgoe your ſelves, diſtruſting God in caſe of loſing them, fearing the reproach of men, or what domage, hurt and diſhonour may accrue to you in your private deſpiſed condi-

Gen. 22. 2.

conditions: I ſay, this is to ſerve your ſelves and not the Lord. Enquire cloſely as well upon what termes your very gifts themſelves may prove diſhonourable to God (as the caſe may ſtand) as your forfet of them (yea much more) if God call for them. To deſpiſe to ſtoope to the enquiry after the leaſt evill which may defile your conſciences in the improveing of your gifts: or, to live ignorant of any ſuch duty as might honour God as much, or more, then your gifts: To conceale and hide from your owne eyes any part of Gods will, under pretence of the beſt ſervice, done by your gifts: To diſtruſt God in ſupporting you for a good conſcience, in the forfeit of your gifts; and laſtly, to reſt in this, that ſeeing God may uſe your ſinne to his owne glory, therefore your ſinne may ſeeme leſſe in your owne ſight! What are all theſe, ſave unſeaſonably to pin your ſervice upon Gods ſleeve? and to ſerve under a falſe banner, to loſe more in the hundred then you gaine in the ſhire? and in a word, *Vzza* like, out of your heat and reſolution to ſerve, not to care upon what diſhonourable and unſeemly conditions you goe to worke! I judge no particular perſon: I leave you to the judgement of your owne conſcience. I doe not accuſe you as if ye ſought to winne the ſpurres by your parts, or could not take it well of God, if ſometime he held you ſhort in gifts and performances. I preſſe yet another thing: Bee your ſervice never ſo allowable, yet fall not in love ſo with it, pittie not others ſo farre in the want thereof, that you ſhould be unwilling to come under the command of God, as well in ſuffering as in obeying. The ſpirit of Prophets muſt bee ſubject to the Prophets, (be it never ſo good) how much more to God himſelfe? And it is as good ſometime to take counſell as to give it: and as good to looke ſo to ſome one thing (which wee deſire, and finde our ſelves enabled by God unto) as yet not to blindfold our other eye to over ſee ſome other duty lying before us, which (although perhaps it be unwelcomely ſudden to us, and ſpeake in our caſt, yet) is ſuch an one as God calls for at our hands to a further honouring of him. So ſhall wee doe greater things (when God abaſes us in our ſelves, and hath us at his becke) then, when all our beſt gifts are improved, without ſuch a command: ſo alſo ſhall we proportion our ſelves in ſome beautifull ſort to walke with God, and truſt his Alſufficiencie both in our ſufferings and our doings: and God ſhall honour himſelfe in both, and us for both, we doing both, in ſelfe-denyall and faith. Although (poore wretches) when wee have done all wee ſhall be but unprofitable ſervants.

Fourthly, this is terror and conviction to all Papiſts and formall worſhippers. Papiſts firſt, for their ſcorning the ſimplicity of Chriſt and his Miniſtery and ordinances: and counting the meane things thereof a derogation to their Religion, and an occaſion to make the worſhip of God vile and contemptible to the people. And therefore inſtead of meane and fooliſh things, they ſtabliſh pompous, great and wiſe waies and devices of their owne: glorious Images, Roods, Crucifixes, reliques, donaries of gold, ſilver and jewels: They fill their Churches with paintings and curious pictures, and ſtrive who ſhall outſtrip the other in the beauty of buildings, the curioſity of carvings, of imbelliſhings of Idols, who ſhall have the richeſt copes and canopies, and the moſt ſumptuous Altars, chalices, pixes, and other complements belonging: when their Maſſe is

2 Kings

Note well.

1 Cor. 14. 32.

Luke 17. 10.

Vſe 4. Popiſh ſtatelineſſe of devotion is odious to God.

2 Kings

moſt gorgeouſly ſet forth to the ſenſe, and when the Miniſtery of Chriſt is thereby eaten up (as the fat kine by the lean) when all ſpirituall means of mortification are turned to carnall and outward, ſuch as the fleſh delights in, but the lazy and baſe heart of man abhorres, then do they think the ſervice of God beſt diſpatched. Oh ye hypocrites! who doe oppoſe God point blanke in his purpoſe, and turne the converſion of ſoules into perdition of them; how will ye anſwer God in his day of account? ye pretend that hereby ye grace Gods ſervice, but, the truth is, ye overthrow it, embondaging the ſenſes and enthralling the conſciences of men to a worſhip pleaſing and poſſeſſing the carnall part, but leaving their ſoules leane and ſterved for lack of ſpirituall inſtruction. God requires that his
1 Cor. 2. 1. 2. ſpirit in the ordinances, ſhould quaſh and controll all the excellency of man: and you ſtrive by amuſing and detaining the eies and eares and ſenſes of the body, with pompe and ſtate, to quaſh the power of preaching, and the efficacy of the ſpirit. But there ſhall come forth a fire out of the breath of his mouth one day, and conſume all theſe inventions of yours, and carry both you and them to the place whence they came. The miſery is, that in the meane time, you do ſnare and lead innumerable ſoules to hell, and leave them at laſt either to fenſleſnes or deſpaire, and none may ſay, what doe you?

Proud hypocrites diſdaine to be taught by mean perſons.

The like I may ſay of all formall hypocrites: who diſdaine the ſillines of Gods Miniſters, preaching, and ſacraments: they forſooth ſcorn that every baſe fellow ſhould have the credit of converting them; they could be content to heare Chriſt preach, or *Paul*, or ſome of the Apoſtles (who yet if they were among them ſhould be as baſe with them as the baſeſt) they muſt either heare ſome great learned Doctor, or ſchollar of renowne ſpeake to them, or elſe they will not lend their eare: others ſay that their Jeſuits are the only men of learning now a daies, as for our Engliſh Preachers, alas! they are but ſilly fellowes to build a mans faith upon: In a word, either they will ground themſelves upon the wiſedome of fleſh, and the preaching of ſuch as ſeeke with curious and quaint oratory, and the deceitfulneſſe of man, to entangle the minde, or elſe they care not whether they heare any or no. But oh ye wiſe worldings! know ye that God doth uſually the greateſt things by meaneſt inſtruments? know ye not that fleſh loves it ſelfe, and that there is ſmall hope of doing any great things by fleſhly meanes? ſhould then fleſh glory in her ſelfe, and take away the glory from God, by an unſanctified and unſavoury boaſting of it owne ſtrength? Surely looke to it, they who build their faith on man, muſt ruſh their ſoules to deſtruction of neceſſitie. And the wiſedome of God hath choſen the fooliſhneſſe of preaching to ſave them that beleeve. If ever yee looke for this, be wiſe in time, and become fools
1 Cor. 1. 1. 27. that ye may be truly wiſe to ſalvation. Of which I ſhall ſpeake more fully in the next uſe.

Vſe 5. Examin.

Laſtly therefore, let it be uſe of examination, to all ſorts, to try themſelves about this iſſue, what great things God hath wrought in them by the poore and ſilly meanes of his Ordinances. Try whether the Lord hath by them tranſlated you from the kingdome of Satan and darkneſſe, to the kingdome of his deare Sonne, rid you out of the thraldome of your luſts and Idols, to ſerve the living God. Thinke not that the kingdome

of

of Chriſt ſtands in a few trickes of wit, or entiſing words of a frothy Mounteebankes tongue: thinke not that fine ſentences, or ſtrong lines, or a jangling wit, priding it ſelfe in a vaine-glorious Preacher, will goe for pay, when Chriſt ſhall come to judge. The great worke which hee will look for, will be faith unfained, a broken ſpirit, love out of a pure heart, & a new creature. Therefore take ſome markes hereof, and try your ſelves.

Trials and markes of our fleſhly wiſedome ſubdued Luke 18. 8.

First, the Lord by poore meanes, will caſt downe that frame of carnall wiſedome in you, be it never ſo ſtrongly ſetled, and convince yee of your folly, in that you ſhould ever ſo beſot your owne ſelves, as to thinke, that the way to heaven ſhould lye in ſuch a courſe as you have walked in. Oh! (ſhall you ſay) if ever I goe to heaven, God muſt turne a new leafe with mee! fleſh and bloud, a curious humorous conceit, will never inherit the kingdome of God: The Lord, I ſay, will diſcover to your eye, ſuch an excellencie in his Ordinances, even when they ſeeme weakeſt to your fancie, that you ſhall fall downe and ſay, The Lord is in you of a truth. The ſcales of your carnall eye ſhall fall off, and you ſhall bee annointed with eye-ſalve, to behold wonders in thoſe poore inſtruments and ordinances which you have ſo long deſpiſed. The old judgement of error, and this fooliſh world, ſhall be taken away, and a new Spirit of diſcerning ſhall be given you, to looke off from the baſe out-ſide of man, of preaching, of Sacraments, and you ſhall ſee a divine power and majeſtie therein. The Aſſe ſhall not ſeeme ſo baſe as the rider ſeemes glorious: and you ſhall ſtrew your clothes, and bowes of trees in the way of Chriſt, crying *Hoſanna*, and magnifying God, that by ſuch poore pipes and channels, conveyes ſo great things to men. Ask your ſelves, did you ever perceive ſuch a worke wrought in you? If not, you ſtill abide in the gall of bitternesſe, and are pur-blinde, ſeeing nothing a far off.

Acts 9. Revel. 3. Pſal. 119.

Secondly, the Lord will make you ſo farre from your diſdaine, that he will make you crouch and be glad of the ſillieſt Miniſter of God in all the countrey, as thoſe Acts 2. who came trembling about thoſe ſame Apoſtles (whom in the former Chapter they had flouted and mocked, as drunken with new wine) and ſaid, Men and brethren, what ſhall wee doe to be ſaved? So ſhall you doe, ſuch as you have jeered for zealous men of the Spirit, you ſhall now be glad to bee admitted to aske them what courſe you may take to eſcape hell? and ſurely try your ſelves in this point, if ſtill your diſeſteeme of Gods Miniſters continue in you, you are none of thoſe in whom GOD hath wrought any great worke in.

2 Triall.

Acts 2. 37.

Thirdly, the Lord ſhall correct that corrupt ſelfe-love and partialitie in you, whereby the affectation of ſome odde Miniſter whom you humored, covered and darkened the graces & gifts of God in others, leſſe reputed of by you. Oh! now ſhall the Lord purge out your private judgment, and put a publicke ſpirit of communion of Saints into you: Alas! you ſhall ſee all the Miniſters of Chriſt one as well as another, to bee the mutuall aiders of your faith, and furtherers of your joy, given by God, not for this or that man, but for the good of the whole body. And accordingly you ſhall prize them, even for the graces of God in them, and for the uſe which they ſerve, even the worke of the Miniſterie, and the edifying of the Church in love. Partialitie and private ends of your own ſhall

3 Triall.

1 Cor. 3. Epheſ. 4.

2 Kings

ſhall ſtinke unto, as knowing, that if God convert you to himſelfe, hee makes you members of the body, which beares you up, not you it. Not the meanneſſe of the veſſell ſhall now offend you, but the rich treaſure in it ſhall raviſh you: now if your ſouls may be ſaved, all other reſpects ſhall vaniſh.

4 Triall. Fourthly, God will teach us to deny our ſelves in that baſe eaſe and ſloth of our ſpirits, which ſatisfies us in having, in hearing a Miniſter, and the ſound of his words, which contents us in that wee enjoy Sabbaths, Sermons, and Sacraments by courſe, in a rolling ſucceſſion, without obſerving the power and ſavour which any of them leave in us. This commonneſſe, and taking all for granted upon a cuſtome, blindes us, even as a cloath hung before our eye, hinders the action thereof, and puts it out by degrees. This ordinarie accuſtoming of our ſelves to that which is obvious, caſts a veile over our hearts, ſo that we never come within the holineſſe of the ordinances, neither mark any great worke done by them, either in our ſelves or others. And by this meanes wee are hardned by them, rather then wrought upon, either by humbling, quickning, or renewing. How hath the Lord then wrought in us? have we after a long ſleepy, and drowſie hearing and receiving, at laſt been pulld by the eare, and jogged by the Spirit, to ſtand up, and be awakened, to ſee the wonders hidden under the veile of humane infirmitie, and the povertie of the Ordinances. Doe we wax wearie of formall remembring of a few ſentences, or commending the Preacher, talking of what we heard; and doe our hearts begin to burne within us when the Word is opened through the evidence of that Spirit which ſpeakes in the Word? Doe we feel the weight of truth uttered by a weake man, to bring our ſoules under the authoritie of God, even as if hee himſelfe ſpake? Doe wee feele the power of an Ordinance (as farre above man, as heaven is above earth) to awe and over-rule us? It is a ſigne that God is preparing to worke ſomewhat more then ordinary in us, if we ſuffer it not to ſlip from us.

Luke 24.

5 Mark. Fifthly, this ſhall be another ſigne to us, if wee acknowledge a providence of ſpeciall mercie, in that the Lord will uſe poore meanes to convey his greatneſſe and goodneſſe into us: For, what proportion is there between the Majeſty of God, and our baſeneſſe? Or how ſhould wee endure either to heare his voyce, or the voyce of an Angell? Therefore the familiaritie of the inſtrument, and the weakneſſe of the Ordinances, is a great benefit unto our ſimpleneſſe. And as thoſe Iſraelites were not able to beare the terrors of God, no nor ſo much as the face of *Moſes* (being armed and honoured with the extraordinary gifts of the ſpirit) were faine to deſire that *Moſes* might ſpeake, and that with a veyle upon his face, to weaken the ſhining of his countenance: So ſhould wee turne our offence at the baſeneſſe of Chriſt, and the ordinances, into admiration and thankes, that thereby, the excellency of God might bee accommodated the more eaſily to our weakneſſe.

Exod. 20.

6 Mark. Sixtly, another marke is, when the ſinfulneſſe of the inſtrument abuſing the ordinance, by his ignorant, raſh, confuſed and unprofitable handling of the word: yea, attempting the Sacraments with profane hands, through the ſcandalouſneſſe of his life: doth not weaken the eſteeme of the ordinances themſelves in our hearts, nor cauſe us to ſtumble at them, &

ſlight

ſlight them ever the more. Rather, when our ſoules tremble at ſuch impudence and boldneſſe of man, (that they ſhould dare with unskilfull or impure ſpirits, to obtrude themſelves upon Gods holy matters) and looke up to God by prayer, that either he would better and change, or elſe caſt them out of his Church, that they may no longer darken and deſtroy the excellencie of truth, by their ſacriledge and audaciouſneſſe. Mean time, looking beyond the ſin of the perſon, let us behold the glory of that Ordinance in the nature thereof, which yet wee ſee ſo ſullied and eclipſed by the blindneſſe and wickedneſſe of baſe uſurpers.

Laſtly, when wee can faſten upon thoſe great things which the Lord offers us by weake meanes, and that by faith in a promiſe; taking them out as our owne peculiar portion. For, as when the Lord caſt downe the walls of Jerico by thoſe Rams-hornes', the chiefe active inſtrument of the miracle, was, the faith of the Church, as the Author of the Hebrewes tells us; ſo, the great things of God are conveyed by faith into the heart, through the Conduit of a promiſe. Looke what the Lord of the Ordinances, Sabbath, and Sacraments, hath promiſed to work by them in the ſoule, (when there ſeemes leaſt likelihood to man) that the ſoule may and will expect from him thereby through faith. 7 Mark. Heb. 11.

Therefore try our ſelves in ſome of theſe. This doctrine aimes not at diſcourſing of the ſeverall workes of the Word; yet ſo farre as the point will admit, let us try our ſelves by ſome of them. The promiſe of God aſſures us, that the weapons of the Miniſter of God, are mightie, through God, to caſt downe ſtrong Towers of a prejudicate, rebellious, ſtout proud heart, and the high thoughts of man, which reſiſts the obedience of Chriſt: Can we then ſpeake it in truth, that we have found this vertue go out from the Word into us, that when wee went to the Word full of our ſelves, yet we have returned thence emptie? And as a Souldier out of an hot battell, wherein he hath loſt an hand, a legge, or received ſome deadly wound; yea, (which is more) loſt his great ſtomacke, ſo that hee ſees himſelfe to be a very foole, and no body to that he ſeemed: So, have wee ſeen that in the Law which hath cooled our courage, and made us affraid to ſet up our briſtles any more? Then a weak Ordinance hath wrought a ſtrong worke in us; for it hath maſtered that which was our ſtrong fort, I meane the fervour of our jolly ſtomacks. It was not the work of a poore inſtrument, but the power of God which did it. 2 Cor. 10. 4.

Againe, it is the promiſe of God that the truth ſhall make us free? Have we then felt that it hath unbound our ſoules from the chaines of our feare, bondage and infidelitie? Hath it ſo enlightned us with the glad tidings of Chriſt, that it hath alſo piercied into our affections deeply, to long and hunger after them for our ſelves? Did we finde, that after once we heard the truth as it is in Jeſus, wee could not lin, nor give over till it conveyed the merit of his ſatisfaction and bloud into us, to pacifie our conſcience, and to rid us of that feare of death, whereunto before wee were ſubject? And ſo renew our ſoules by the efficacie of his death, ſo that we have crucified our old man with the affections and luſts: and felt the bloud, ſtrength and marrow of the new *Adam* and quickning Spirit reviving our veines and bones? Surely then poore meanes have done great things in us, far above all which the power of weake man can reach unto. Heb. 2. 15. Epheſ. 4. 18.

2 Kings

2 Tim. 1.

unto. Againe, the Goſpell ſerves to breed and beget the ſoule to the hope of immortality and life in us. Doe wee then feele, that as poore as the Preacher was, yet the Lord over-ruled him ſo, as by the power of the Spirit breathing in him, the carnall ſavour of the creature, the love of the world, and a fading life here below, is driven out of us, and the breath and ſavour of Grace and Heaven is put into us? Hath it caſt out our lingring after an earthly Paradiſe, irrecoverable, and carried us into a Paradiſe of glory, never to be caſt out more? Hath it filled us with heavenly deſires, even while we are upon earth? Hath it ſet us in an eſtate of content and peace? yea, as it were in a rich veine of hope, wherein wee are reſtleſſe, and ever digging deeper, till we attaine full ſatisfaction in the fulneſſe of the fountaine? Surely, if we can ſay this, in any meaſure, we may buy and ſell upon it, that the promiſe by faith hath been the mean of uniting us, baſe fleſh, and ſinfull duſt and aſhes, to the Lord himſelfe, eternall and incomprehenſible: that is to ſay, corrupt, weake, wretched man, to God, bleſſed for ever. Nothing can doe ſuch a worke but a divine ordinance by the power of a Mediator through a promiſe: for what is weaker then a Miniſter to effect it, or what more impoſſible and incompatible, in reaſon, then for a ſinfull man to partake it? This then bee ſaid of this ſecond thing collected out of this verſe, to wit, the meanes of *Naaman* his healing, the waſhing in Jorden.

The third gerall.

Object.

The third and laſt point out of this verſe I will propound by anſwering a queſtion briefly, ariſing out of the former doctrine. For it may bee demanded, ſeeing that, not the waters themſelves were the cauſe of effecting this cure upon *Naaman*, but the power of God onely in and by them. To what end did the Prophet ſo preſſe upon him the waſhing in Jorden? and why had it been ſo heynous a contempt for him to have neglected this charge? The anſwer is double: Firſt, in reſpect of the neceſſary concurrence of the water to the inſtrumentalnes of Gods working: Secondly, in reſpect of a ſigne or ratification of the promiſe in the heart of *Naaman*.

Anſw.

Why God uſeth outward means to convey grace: viz. To ſtop mans devices.

To open both theſe in a word: For the former, it is alway the courſe of God to worke by meanes and inſtruments, ſenſible and bodily; when hee hath to doe with us, men of a bodily and ſenſible nature. As in the duty of prayer, though the worke thereof is properly ſpirituall and holy, and the Lord can tell our hearts, as well as our tongues; yet it is his will that we offer it up by the inſtrument of outward ſpeech, orderly ſet & ſenſible:

Hoſea 13. 2.

Take unto you words & ſay, receive us graciouſly. So, though the power of regeneration ſtand not in ſpeech, but in the Holy Ghoſt: yet the Lord will not ſo worke immediately, but by the miniſtery of man to man, hee hath ordained to convey his ſpirit into the heart. And the reaſon is plain: for elſe what a door ſhould be ſet open to the fantaſticall ſpirit of man, to vent his owne ſpeculations and conceits, without any warrant from God? Who would not frame to himſelfe revelations of the Spirit, and deviſe new inventions of ſerving God? How doe Anabaptiſts boaſt of their owne fancies? How doe they deſpiſe the ordinary calling of Miniſters and preaching, and thruſt forth themſelves by the inſtinct of their owne ſpirit, as if they were ſome great perſons? How do Papiſts deviſe new worſhips, as that Maſſe of theirs (which is nothing elſe ſave a maſſe of many ingredients added by ſundry of their Popes, or maſters of ceremonies)

nies) and thoſe many Sacraments of theirs, whereof not one print of Gods appointing appeares in all the Scriptures? If this be done by them, againſt the expreſſe will of God, what would they have attempted, if they had been left unto themſelves? How infinite would they then have been? Therfore the Lord wil have all that look for any worke of his Spirit, to attend the means cloſely, and reverently, and only by & through them to expect for bleſſing. If God pleaſe to unite his grace only to them (ordinarily) may it not well beſeeme us to tye our attendance and obſervation of his power in and by them? This is one cauſe why the Lord would not extraordinarily convey himſelfe to the Eunuch, to *Cornelius*, to *Saul* at Damaſcus, ſave by the intermediall inſtruments of *Peter*, *Philip*, and *Ananias*; our ſpirit is alway in our extremities: for either wee runne to our fancies, conceits, ſloath and eaſe, contemning the meanes, or elſe (when meanes muſt be uſed) we fall to idolize them; both which the holy Ghoſt abhorres.

Acts 8. Acts 10. Acts 9.

Another reaſon is, in reſpect of *Naaman* himſelfe; who was a novice. It was the will of God to heale him by faith in a promiſe. Now becauſe that was a difficult object for him to ſettle upon, the Lord appoints him this outward and reall ſigne of the waters, to prop up his faith by, and to ſettle his inner ſpirit by the externall ſenſe. As if he ſhould ſay, Goe thy wayes, I will heale thy leproſie beleeve me: and if that be unlikely to thee, loe I give thee a ſigne, even the waters of Jorden, that, as verily as thou ſhalt drench thy ſelfe therein, ſo verily will I by my ſpirit heale thee. Occupy thy ſelfe in obeying of me, and loe, I will be preſent with thee, to put thy weake heart out of doubt, concerning thy cure. This was alway the courſe which the Lord tooke with his old Church, whenſoever he promiſed any bleſſing or deliverance unto them. Thus *Gedeon* a man inexpert in warre, was faine to be ſtrengthned by the fleece both dry and wet: and by the dreame of a barley loafe by one of the Midianites; yea the Lord never revealed any purpoſe of his to the Prophets, concerning either the publique, or any ſpecial perſon, but he ſtrengthned it by ſome outward ſigne, ſuting the thing, and affecting the ſenſe. Thus when the Lord meant to rend tenne Tribes from *Rehoboam*, and give them to *Ieroboam*, *Ahijah* the Prophet is ſent to teare his garment into twelve pieces, and to give him tenne, and keepe two. A very reall reſemblance. And that young Prophet to ſtrengthen his denunciation againſt the ſame *Ieroboam*, and his idoll at Bethel, told him two ſignes, one preſent, *viz.* the falling out of the aſhes from the broken Altar of ſacrifice: the other to come, *Ioſiahs* poluting thoſe high places by burning the bones of the Prieſts upon them. So *Eſay* ſtrengthens *Hezekia*, in the newes of his recovery, by that famous ſigne of the Sunnes going backe tenne degrees. And ſo, when *Ahaz* refuſed the ſigne, the Prophet gave the Church one touching the deliverance from *Rezin*: to wit, the conceiving of a Virgin (ſome two or three hundreds of yeares after) even with a ſonne, whoſe name ſhould be *Emanuel*. Infinite it were, to ſpeake of *Ezekiels* bricke, pourtraying the ſiege of Jeruſalem, the hole in the wall, by which he convayed away his ſtuffe: *Ieremies* basket of figges, the beſt and worſt, that could be eaten, to deſcribe the difference betweene the Jewes in Babel, and the rebels at Jeruſalem. The like was *Agabus* his taking *Pauls* girdle: and the very falſe

Reaſon 2. Whyare ſignes & ſacraments uſed by the Lord, for the effecting of ſpirituall things, viz. to aſſure our weak faith.

Judg. 6. & 7. & 8.

2 King 11.

Cap 13.

Eſay 37.

Eſay 8.

2 Kings

falſe Prophets *Zidkijah* and *Hananiah*, affected the like courſe in their hornes and yokes. Even ſo, the Lord did teach his people by many bodily ceremonies, cleanſing of leproſie by the Prieſt, and, waſhing by outward ſacrifices, and the like. And by thoſe many reſemblances of the blood of the Paſchall Lamb ſprinkled, and the fleſh of it eaten: as alſo by Manna, the Rocke guſhing forth with water: Alſo by the cutting off the foreskin of the male, he made the Lord Jeſus and the power of his death and croſſe to bee knowne ſacramentally, (although but darkly) in his Church. And now under the New Teſtament, although the worſhip be more ſpirituall, yet the courſe is the ſame. True it is, Sacraments exceed ſignes in their efficacy, yet agree with them in this generall kinde of outward ſignifying or ſtrengthning the ſoule by ſignes. For what elſe doth the Lord by Baptiſme, or the Supper, but ratifie the weake receiver, in reſpect of the faith of the Covenant?

Sacraments excell common ſignes.

Let us therefore make uſe of this holy courſe of God for our conviction and aſſurance: and as ſeales exceed bare covenants, becauſe they carry the parties to an aſſurance of faithfulneſſe betweene them, through the ſtrength of the Law of the land in that caſe made and provided, that they may not ſtagger or queſtion the meaning of each other: ſo, let us thankfully embrace the courſe of God toward us for our eſtabliſhment in his purpoſe and covenant, both to ingraft us into himſelfe, and nouriſh us in himſelf, as the branch in the ſtock. Let us not cavil at the difference of miraculous and ordinary ſignes: for the Author of the one, is author of the other, and (in meaſure beſt known to himſelfe) hath promiſed concurrence with the one as well as the other: yea, the miraculous herein, comes ſhort of the ordinary, in that the former had but a temporary aſſiſtance for the preſent occaſion; whereas the ordinarie have promiſe of a more ſpirituall and excellent aſſiſtance untill the end of the world: let us not then requite the Lord baſely for this his proviſion: let us not become weaker thereby, as weake children in their limbs, when they are taught to ſtay themſelves by a raile or frame for the nonce, grow weaker after ſuch proviſion then before. Whereas rather we ſhould uſe ſuch helps as purblinde eyes, and weake limbs uſe: that as Spectacles and Crutches, both to preſerve and relieve their ſight and goings. We ſhould ſtruggle againſt our carnall diſtruſt, by theſe ſenſible ſtayes, and ſay: As verily as I have been waſht in the Jorden of Baptiſme, ſo verily ſhall the fleſh of my ſoul come again, as the fleſh of a little child, I ſhall be clean, and I lot upon it by faith. As truly as I take, and eate and drink this bread and this wine, ſo certainly ſhall I bee nouriſhed in my weake faith, and cheered in my fainting, drooping ſpirit, to run my race, & to grow in holineſſe. But becauſe I have in a ſet treatiſe for the nonce, preſſed this point fully, therfore I heer repeat nothing: let the Reader look upon the former Treatiſe of the Sacraments, as I have alledged it before. It is now time to put an end to this doctrine and verſe, and to conclude the Sermon. Let us pray, &c.

See alſo more of this in the 21 Lecture, after.

THE

THE FOVRTH LECTVRE
Vpon the eleventh verſe.

VERSE XI.

But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and ſaid, Behold, I thought hee will ſurely come foorth to me, and ſtand and call upon the Lord his God, and ſtrike his hand upon the place, and recover the Leper.

VERS. 12. *Are not Abana and Pharfar rivers of Damaſcus better then all the waters of Iſrael? &c.*

WEE are now (beloved) by providence come to the ſecond generall head of this Text, and that which containes in it one of the maine ſcopes for which I choſe this Scripture. And it containeth in it the anſwer of *Naaman* to the Prophets meſſage: For the handling whereof I will firſt lay down the method of the anſwer in theſe two verſes, and ſo come (God willing) to the ſeverall points therein, as they lye in their order. Generally then obſerve, that *Naaman* is thorowly tried by Gods delaying of his cure: God ſearches him to the quick, now he is ſet in this faire way of providence, yet the Lord ſtops his courſe, and makes the cure more longſome then hee looked for: And how doth *Naaman* take it? Surely very ill, and unwelcomly. This generall containes three ſpecialls: The firſt (not in words, but in ſenſe) is the ground of this diſtaſte, which he doth not conceale; he is too full, and this is the third affront he had met with in his journey: For firſt, hee goes the wrong way to the King of Iſrael, and loſes that labour. Secondly, when he is ſet in his way, lo, hee comes to the Prophets houſe and crouches; but the Prophet comes not at him. Thirdly, that might have been borne, if the errand had bene thereafter; but now that alſo favours of dallying and delay, and now he utters all, and ſaith; Behold, I thought with my ſelfe, he would come out and lay on his hand and heale me; but lo, he ſends me word I muſt goe to Jorden. Surely, this is but mockery, I cannot thinke he meanes me good: Thus he utters himſelfe. The root then of his diſcontent, is his conceit or ſelfe-prejudice, he would frame a way of cure to himſelfe, without any warrant from God or the Prophet; to wit, that now (ſure) the worke would ſoon be done, *Eliſha* would lay on his hand upon the diſeaſe, and in Gods name heale it without any more adoe. Now he ſees it falls out otherwiſe, hee is at a ſet, and knowes not what

The ſecond generall of the text, viz. *Naamans* anſwer to the meſſage.

Naaman tried by Gods delay of the cure.

Three ſpecialls in this verſe.

1. *Naamans* ſelfe-conceit and prejudice.

The opening of it.

2 Kings

what to make of it: If hee had moderated himſelfe in his heate of ſelfe-thoughts, and ſaid thus within himſelfe; Surely, it is God that I have to doe withall, and how hee will goe to worke with me, I know not: I may imagine a thing, but he in whoſe power the ſtroke is, muſt determine, and good reaſon that I follow, and be led by him; and well I may, for I ſhall be a gainer at the laſt; and what is it for me to wait, in reſpect of the exceeding good I ſhall enjoy? If this had been his thought, how well and equally had his heart been carried through the worke? But lo, ſelfe-opinion ſets ſuch a colour before his eye, that hee is wholly tranſported with it out of his owne poſſeſſion, and now being croſſed of his own plot and way of healing, he is out of patience. This is the firſt thing.

The ſecond ſpeciall: The fruit of this conceit. Diſcontent and rage.

The ſecond is the fruit of this defeat, and that is wrath, and going away in a rage: both teſtimonies of ſelfe-defeated: Firſt at the meſſage hearing he is wroth, and when he had vented the cauſe, then (as a man gathering more and more ſtomacke) he addes this, viz. an abandoning and renouncing of the Prophet, and turnes away in a rage; yea, reſolves to give him over (as full of him as hee was before) and to goe home as hee came, let all goe which way it will, hee will loſe all his labour, rather then be thus gulled and mocked by any man. A ſtrange thing that this ſtuffe ſhould appeare in him, who had ſo farre put himſelfe upon the Prophet.

The third ſpeciall: His ſtrengthening himſelfe in his humour, by carnal reaſon, in Verſe 12.

The third thing is the backing and hardning himſelf in this his diſcontent (for all wrathfull ones love to ſeeme mad with reaſon, leſt it ſhould appeare that want of reaſon made them ſo) and his colour is to confute the Prophets meſſage. The ſumme is, the Prophet hath ſent for me to make a gull of me, pretending to heal me when he intends nothing leſſe: For if he did, to what end ſhould he preſcribe me to waſh in Jorden? If waſhing there would ſerve, how comes it to paſſe, that there bee ſo many Lepers in Iſrael unhealed? And if ſo be, Jorden be ſuch ſoveraigne water, what are our rivers at home, Abana and Pharfar, which yet never were knowne to be medicinable for the leproſie? What a meſſage then is this to ſend me, Waſh in Jorden and be clean? Lo (I beſeech you) to what a man may come who is blind-folded with ſelfe! He will ſtiffen himſelf in his error by any argument comming next hand: Carnal reaſon then here offers it ſelfe to confute the meſſage, as a mockery. And how (I pray) doth it argue? Thus, Its a ſenſleſſe, unlikely thing, nay impoſſible to reaſon. What then? haſt thou forgot thy ſelfe *Naaman?* Cameſt thou to be healed by reaſon, or by a Prophet? What a conſequence is this? Carnall reaſon judgeth otherwiſe, therefore it is ridiculous that Jorden ſhould heale. Nay rather, if a Prophet from God will heale by Jorden, why may he not? For he heales not by Jorden, as Jorden, but as by an inſtrument of Gods divine power. Therefore rather to argue againſt God by carnall reaſon, is more ridiculous. Thus much for the opening of theſe two verſes.

The firſt generall handled, viz. Why God delayed the cure ſtill? That he might know himſelf.

I will firſt give a briefe touch of the triall which God put here upon *Naaman*, in delaying his cure. Why was it? To try all which was in his heart, and to make him ſee what metall he was made of: God was loath to ſend him away with his cure, and a proud wrathfull heart withall. Therefore now he diſcovers him to himſelfe, and rather by this delay of the

the miracle, chuſes to make all his crouching and humbleneſſe, breake out into rage and diſtemper,& bewray him openly, then he ſhould nuzzle up himſelfe in a faire opinion of that which is not in him. But it wil bee demanded, Did *Naaman* feele the Lord preſent in this worke? Did hee not as a carnal man in all this? or is it any wonder he ſhould be a wrathful raging man, being a Heathen, and croſſed in his maine aime? I anſwer: We muſt not ſo much conceive him as he is in his owne ſenſe, as in Gods ſhaping him to his own end, by grace and converſion. When once *Naaman* truly came to himſelfe, both the former rubs, and this affront of delaying his healing, wrought a marvellous abaſement in his ſoule, and ſet forward the worke exceedingly. I have already handled the reaſon why the Lord ſtopt *Eliſha* from comming out: Now I would briefly adde this, how God tries him in diſappointing his haſte, and thereby occaſions him to rebell and break out, that he might know himſelfe yet more thorowly. And let it teach us this, That the cuſtome of God is, when hee is working any great change in any, hee will try them deeply, and make them know what is in their ſpirits: They ſhall finde many a ſtop in their courſe, things ſhall not ſucceed as they deſire: God wil hide himſelf from them, and ſeeme not to regard their labours, prayers, teares, endevours, but ſuſpend their hopes and deſires from ſuch ſucceſſe as they look for. And why? To try them, of what frame they are, whether their forwardneſſe and zeale bee well planted in them, or no: whether they will wait, or make haſte, attend meekly, or run headlong. If they fall to diſtemper and wearineſſe, God will ſhew it unto them, that they may afterward watch and have themſelves in a deep jealouſie, and not bee deceived with the appearance of grace in ſtead of ſubſtance. If they ſtick to the triall, and carry themſelves meekly and quietly under Gods delayes and prolongings of his time, that then they may acknowledge by what ſtrength they ſtand. However, it is very fit they ſhould be tried.

Thus the Text ſaith, Deut. 8. 2. that the Lord dealt with the Iſraelites in the Wilderneſſe. Firſt, hee would not lead them the right way, by the land of the Philiſtims: but by the Wilderneſſe: and there hee would ſo hold them occupied, that whereas they might have been there in fourty dayes, he led them a traverſe of fourty yeares. Hee held them to hard-meat, and when he gave them a ſupply, yet hee gave them but from hand to mouth: and why was all this? *Moſes* tells them; even to try all that was in their heart, to turne it up-ſide-downe, that by all the weary journey of the Deſert, their hunger, their wants, Gods proviſion, their unthankfulneſſe, Gods judgements, waſting them, delaying aud croſſing their lingring after Canaan, a land flowing with milk and hony, by the ruine of all the carcaſſes of them that came out of Egypt, the Lord might cauſe them to know themſelves & the Lord thorowly, deny themſelves, wait upon his promiſe, and enjoy Canaan with a more humble and thankfull heart, then elſe they had done. Otherwiſe what boot had it been to have brought thē into Canaan with their fathers ſpirits? The land certainly had ſurfeted them, and vomited them out elſe, as ſoone as they had come in: but now experience of the Wilderneſſe, taught them how to walke before God. The Lord begins with his owne as hee means to proceed: Hee meanes to make them patient, meek, enemies to ſelfe, privie to more corruption then

2 Kings

Queſtion.

Anſwer.

Naaman to be conceived of as one under Gods workmanſhip.

Doctrine. Whom God will ſave, he will teach them to to know all in their heart.

Reaſon 1.

Deut. 8. 2.

Reaſon 2. God begins with his people as he means to proceed.

2 Kings

the world knowes of, jealous and watchfull, and willing to be as God will have them, and to thinke it best to be base, when God sees it meet: this I say the Lord is faine to deale with his betimes, even in the first beginnings of his grace, (as a man would bow a twig as he would have it grow after:) And therefore in the very threshold he stops their hasty course, and whereas they would thinke they might be converted and beleeve quickly, assoone as they feele their need and heare of a promise, lo, the Lord makes it a longer worke then so, and delayes them, till he have laid a foundation for after times, till he have made them know all that is in their heart, and not think much of Gods corrections afterward, as having been traind up to the yoke from their youth. *Ephraim* was as an heifer unaccustomed to the yoke, but when she was yoked and humbled, she converted to God, and smote upon her thigh, and so was fitter for mercy, then when she was wild and unbroken.

Jer. 31. 31.

Reason 3. To teach us the price of grace.

And to say the truth, if the Lord did not thus delay us in our hafte, and put a stop upon us in our proceedings, which of us would ever thinke grace to be such a thing as it is? which of us would not wax wanton with God, and forget our former condition? which of us would prise mercy and conversion as the inestimable, free gift of a gracious God, who might have left us at large, to the corruptions of the world, and the depth of the Divell? But, when we see how the Lord crosseth us, what blocks are in our way, and how hard it is to be vessels prepared for mercy, to be clensed from our evill savour, which would defile the grace of God, then we wonder that ever the Lord should bestow any mercy upon us at all. And so, we walke in the sense and savour of it more humbly and thankfully afterward: we suspect our base hearts, we are jealous of forgoing it, earnest to pursue it, glad of the least dram of it, and why? we know the price and worth of it, by good experience of that it cost us to compasse it. Where is there a man who is meet to enjoy any great matter from God, either outward blessing, or spirituall favour, without pride and swelling? So that the Lord is faint alway to be much in preparing such as he intends to bestow any great matter upon. How long was *David* in preparing by the Lord, ere he came to the kingdome? Between his first anointing, and his Crowning, how many turnagaines and pursuits had he? Surely as the Merchant of the East Indies who ventures for rich wares and pretious commodities hath an hard taske of it, goes through strange hazards, by pirates, by tempests, by winds, by rocks, and by continuall feare, both going for them, and comming home with them: and all to teach him the price of them, that he may after enjoy them more soberly; so is it here. The Lord is faine to prolong the day of his mercy and pardon, and to bring the soul through many adventures, to teach it to enjoy mercy without wantonnesse, giddinesse, lightnesse, and boasting. A drunken man can beare strong drinke or wine with his weake braine, aswell as our slight hearts can entertaine grace: we wax vaine, and frothy, idle and empty, as not knowing what we have received from God, nor how sober and wise we ought to be in the use of it. So *Paul*: the Lord meant to betrust him with deep revelations: But before that, how was he faine to buffet him? what bitter greetings had he of his vile heart, and how was he abased in his owne feeling? And why? Surely to teach him to walke humbly

In this frailty and corruption of nature, we can beare no great measures of grace.

See 1 Sam. from chap. 15. to the end of the book.

2 Cor. 12. 3.

humbly not to ſwell, nor diſdaine others, but to diſtinguiſh the excellency of Gods grace from the baſeneſſe of his owne ſpirit.

Simil.

As we ſee it to fall out in the diſpoſition of ſeaſons and weather: while the winter ſeaſon is in her ſetling and height, although there be a generall coldneſſe of the aire; yet it is mixed with ſome calmneſſe, and moderation: But when once the ſpring tide is approaching, we ſee what inequality of weather there is, winds, raines, tempeſts, and bluſtering: all to purge the ſky, and to bring down the winterly diſtempers of it, that the coaſt being cleare, the ſweet ſeaſon of the ſpring and ſummer may ſucceed. Juſt ſo it is with the ſoule: perhaps while it lies under the winter of her owne deſolation, ſhe makes a ſhift, and hath no great chaines upon her, as being under the hatches of miſery: But if once the Lord cauſe the ſpring time of life and converſion to approach; ſtrange it is, what tempeſts, clouds, and weather ariſe, the heart growes full of feares, corruption rebells, by occaſion of the Law, and ſelfe riſes up in armes by occaſion of the Goſpel; a marvailous change appeares in the ſoule, through terrors, bondage, doubtings, reſiſtings, cavellings, and diſtempers of a baſe heart, loth to leave that hell of hers, (which by cuſtome became her heaven.) But all this is but as it ſhould be, the Lord proceeds gradually and by ſteps, delayes the worke of grace, and all that the coaſt may be ſomewhat cleared before hand, and the ſoule prepared to welcome the ſeaſon of mercy, with calmenes, humbleneſſe and modeſty. To conclude, the Lord is moſt wiſe in thus trying his owne ſervants before he convert them, to the end that he may diſcerne them from ſuch as are not of his number. For why? when hypocrites once come to ſee the conditions of grace, what attendance upon means, what knowledge and ſenſe of ſin, what deep convincing of conſcience is required: how humble, hungry, painfull, earneſt, the Lord lookes the ſoule ſhould be, that deſires grace, how plain-hearted in her aimes, and priſing it above all liberties, how willing to ſell all, (and glad it may) to buy this pearle: lo, their rotten carnall hearts fly off, and abhorre to ſtoop ſo low upon any hopes: They thought heaven might be compaſſed with ſmall adoe, and that they might have it, and their owne wills too: But when they ſee it will not be: nay more, that many a poore honeſt ſoule is faine to waite long at Gods gate, till he ſee it a fit ſeaſon to beſtow his grace upon it: alas! poore wretches! they never were either ſo pinched with ſinne, nor affected with mercy, as to beſtow halfe the coſt for it, although they might be ſure of it: and therefore they fall off, either altogether, and ſo turne backe to their luſts; or elſe, if light and compulſion of conſcience ſcare them from that, they ſtill abide as they are in a ſapleſſe, fulſome, and dead courſe. But it is not ſo with the others. Gods true Merchants of the beſt pearles, who know the true worth of them, will not be beaten off by ſuch diſcouragements, but (but with *Naaman* in the verſes following) rather then they will forfet all their hopes, and carry back their lepers skin with them: they will put their lives in their hands, or rather themſelves in the Lords, to deale with them as he pleaſe, and whatſoever difficulties or delayes they meet with, they will beare them, ſeeing they are for the beſt, all ſhall end well: By waiting the Lord will appeare at laſt, but by giving him over, they are ſure to periſh. Oh! there is great uſe of this courſe! how many deſperate

Reaſon 4. To diſcerne them from ſuch as are not his owne.

See Mat. 13. 44.

2 Kings

hypocrites doth the Lord trie hereby, discovering their baseneſſe, rage, and discontent? and how doth he comfort his owne faithfull poore ſervants, that have waited upon his ſalvation, aſſuring them it was his owne grace that ſuſtained them in ſuch delayes and difficulties to hold on?

Vſe Inſtruction & admonition to all Novices in grace, not to be diſmaid for difficulties.

The uſe whereof ſhould be inſtruction and admonition to all *Naamans* and novices in regeneration and the worke of converſion: firſt, that they make no other account before hand but to finde difficulties and affronts in their way, although perhaps they ſet forward at firſt with faire winde and great hopes: yet that both winde and tide may turne againſt them, before they have done. Let not him that puts on his harnis, boaſt as he that puts them off. Rather make account of the hardeſt before and be armed againſt it, be not diſcouraged nor faint in the onſet, for I tell thee the worſt of Gods way is eaſier then the beſt of thy former courſe of luſt and ignorance, the pathes whereof are pleaſant, yet going downe to hel. And being warned thus, it will be halfe an arming to thee, it will coole thy carnall heat, ſend thee to God for ſtrength, and make thee out of favor of thy ſelfe-attempts. Secondly, when thou ſhalt meet with ſuch hardneſſes in the way, wonder not nor ſhrinke backe: ſay thus, I entred upon regeneration with this proviſo, and laboured to caſt the hardeſt. If eaſier termes be offred by Gods providence, if Satan be kept off, or corruption held under, or the work made ſweeter then I feared, let me count it my gain and a portion which many of my brethren want. But if I meet with brunts, let me not deſiſt and goe backe to Egypt, but proceed on towards Canaan, hoping that yet the iſſue ſhall be good. Say thus, now the Lord is trying of me, of what mettle I am made, even as he tryed thoſe ſouldiers that ſooped water, or lapped it: now is the ſeaſon for me to looke about me, now let me abhorre to play the timeſerver, hypocrite, ſtaggerer, and revolter from Gods way, becauſe I meet with offences in it. If now I turne away and be diſtempered, vowing that I will never goe on one ſtep further, nor ſtrike one ſtroke more, I ſhall ſhew my ſelfe and the mettle I am made of, but if I ſhall meekely devour and digeſt theſe affronts, then I ſhall ſhew a patient wayting heart upon God, and one that eſteemes grace above all my labour, and a rich bargaine upon the price. If *Naaman* had beene aware what God intended him before hand, hee had ſaid no leſſe: God tryes me by this delay, God make me meek, and keep me from rage! But becauſe he was yet ignorant, therefore hee muſt bee conceived as one whoſe paſſions and anger the Lord meant to cover and pardon in due time, and therefore now over-ruled for his good afterward.

Judg. 7.

Queſt. What difficulties are they which Gods travellers endure?

Anſw. Manifold.

1. Inward.

1. 2.

3.

But ſome may aske, what difficulties doe ye meane? I anſwer, ſuch as theſe. Many enter upon converſion upon great hopes and affections ſtirred up by the Goſpell: But after a while, perhaps it pleaſes God to ſhew them their faces in ſuch a glaſſe of terror and confuſion, that their hopes are turned into horror for ſome good ſpace together. And in this condition they are tempted perhaps to avoide wounds of conſcience by making away themſelves if God ſtaid them not. Others feel a raging heart againſt the Law and Miniſter for ſearching their ſores and convincing them ſo deeply, if God turned it not to good after, and thereby tawed them not more throughly by their owne corruption. Others are in conſult

ſult with themſelves, whether they were not better abandon all hearing and praying any longer, and returne to their joviall company and pleaſures of ſinne againe; that ſo they may ſhun this ſharpe Schoolemaſter by playing the trewants, and ſo be at ſome eaſe: except God ſhew them that this diſcipline (as untoothſome as it is) yet is wholeſome. Others ſtick long at this knot having a ſlaviſh ſad melancholy ſpirit, delighting in ſullenneſſe and feare; eſpecially if ſad croſſes mixe themſelves with inward heavineſſe (as ill marriage, debts, purſuits, ill ſucceſſe, and the like) They thinke God frownes more upon them then in the former daies of their ignorance. Others are as much amazed on the other ſide, becauſe their terrors were never ſo great as others, nor were their conſciences ſo deepely affrighted with wrath and hell, and therefore not duely humbled. Others feele a great meaſure of unmortified luſt and filth to dwell in them, as wrath, pride, hollowneſſe, revenge, and to dog them, ſo that they cannot thinke that ſuch poyſon and mercy to pardon, can poſſibly ſtand together. Others miſtake the doctrine of preparation to faith, thinking it to ſtand in the greatneſſe of meaſure, deepe ſorrow, breaking of heart, deepe ſtreights and being at a deepe loſſe, great longings and thirſtings after mercy, and ſo of the reſt: It is long ere they come to ſee that there muſt bee a ſeed of the Goſpell wrought ere theſe be, or that they ſerve rather for marks of the ſpirit of grace, then any furtherers of it, from any thing in themſelves.

Others feeling theſe wrought in them, yet when they heare that faith only can put them into a ſafe eſtate, they begin to feare that although they are prepared by the condition, yet the Lord will not performe the effect of faith for them (forgetting that Gods meaning in the one was to worke the other) or at leaſt thinke it will be a long time firſt, and they ſhall be out of all heart ere then, or they may dye ere the Lord make an end of his worke. Others conceive amiſſe of the promiſe, thinking it to be offred to ſuch as can take hold of it by themſelves: not knowing that the ſtrength is Gods and not theirs, Eſay 27.5.6. and that the offer comming frō the ſtrength of a ſatisfaction to juſtice, doth ſtrengthen the Lord to make and tender it to a poore ſoule that needs it: and concurs with that ſoule ſtrongly to faſten it thereon, as the due portion belonging to it: Others are marvailouſly diſquieted about their Election, doubting that all their mournings and travailes are to no purpoſe, becauſe they ſtrive againſt Gods will: not remembring that ſecretes are for God, not for for them, and their ſureſt markes come from the obeying of the revealed will. Others (when the fruit is come to the birth) have no ſtrength to bring forth: it ſeemes impoſſible or hard, or unlikely, that ſuch baſe ones ſhould ever beleeve it were too good for ſo unworthy ones: and in truth men looke wholly at their owne ends ſo much, and ſo little at the glory which the Lord chiefly ſeekes to his grace, that they little muſe of the worke as becomming the omnipotency and free bounty of a reconciled God, but of that ſcurffe they feele in themſelves. Theſe are inward.

Others are outward affronts which meet with the ſoule, ſome are moleſted grievouſly with ſad motions and temptations and conflicts from Satan buffeting of them, and ſtopping of their way, by thoughts of feare injected into them; as by Atheiſme, doubting of God, of the truth of Scripture.

2 Kings

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

2. Outward.

1.

2 Kings

Scripture, or with ſuch qualmes and combats as doe ariſe up as ſparkles from the over deepe terrors of conſcience, or the endleſſe riſings of their corrupt hearts, caſting up mire and dirt in them, and in the face of the truth, and this irkſomnes abides long, if God ſee good to enlarge Satan
2. according to his malice. Others are diſcouraged through want of Miniſtry, to follow on that little ſeed of grace which is caſt into them: which is ready to dye for lacke of quickning and advice: and ſo living in deſolate places and deſtitute of powerfull meanes, are long ere they come to any ſetling and ſtrength in a promiſe: not knowing, that where ordinary meanes faile, God himſelfe will not bee wanting to per-
3. fect what hee hath begunne. Others meet with diſcouragements from ſuch as ſhould encourage them; and ſo they fall the more ſadly upon them: When the Spouſe had dallyed with her beloved, through eaſe and carnalll tenderneſſe, ſecurity and ſelfe-love, lo, in following after
Cant. 5. 6. 7. him ſhe was met by the Watchmen, who buffetted her; Theſe ſhould have encouraged her: Even Miniſters are oft great affronts in the way of poore ſoules, rating and ſcorning them for their ſingularity; eſpecially when they (through errour) light upon ſuch, as thinking better of them. So doe Parents, Guardians, Maſters, lay offences in the way of their children, orphans, ſervants; ſome threatning to diſ-inherit them, or to diſgrace them; others by their ſnibbing and chiding, or over-bearing them,
4. doe blaſt that bud which elſe would bloſſome and beare. Others alſo, hoping to ſee examples of many others as zealous as themſelves, to encourage them, and finding that the Goſpel prevails little in theſe dayes, the Spirit growes ſtraitned, people wax dead and ſottiſh, and all their devotion ſtands in hearing Sermons: Alas! they quaile and pull in their horns, like ſnails, and are afraid they have been too forward, and therfore wax as lazie and looſe as others, except God rouze them up by ſome ſad croſſe, and make them to ſee that there muſt be more reſolution in them, if they look after ſalvation, & each tub muſt ſtand upon his own bottome.
5. Others reſting upon their good duties and performances, and thinking religion to conſiſt therein chiefly, when they feele ſmall inward life from thence, but ebbings and flowings, grow at laſt to ſuſpect their bottome; but alas! how long is it, ere they can reforme their error, and take a right courſe? So that, by theſe few inſtances it may appeare, that the difficulties of many who begin fairly, are very tedious, ſo that they finde not the

Concluſion of all with admonition. worke of converſion ſo eaſie as they expected. I conclude therefore as before, let not ſuch be diſmaid, nor give over the work of God, but remember God is now trying them, whether there bee ſoundneſſe or no in them to continue: and if they will wait meekly his leaſure, after hee hath taught them to deny themſelves, he will be found of them, as here of *Naaman*, and reveale himſelfe to them at laſt, more then at firſt.

Vſes 1. Inſtruction. Chriſtians muſt looke for difficulties, as well in their progreſſe, as in their entrance. Secondly, this ſhould alſo teach thoſe who have obtained mercie already, much leſſe to wonder if they meet with ſundry affronts in their courſe of Chriſtianity. For if this be done in the green tree, how much more in the dry? If novices who are ſo unfit for trials, meet with ſo many rubs to keep them from faith: how much more muſt they looke for them whoſe ſtrength is greater? Therefore conſider, I pray you, and know God will try all, upon whom he hath beſtowed any ſpeciall favours

and

and bleſſings: One way or other, ſooner or later, the Lord will lay ſtops and blockes in your way, to try what is in you: and whether all that hee hath done for you, can prevaile ſo farre with you, as to think him worth the cleaving and clinging unto, with faith and confidence. *Abraham* muſt be tried by *Iſaac*, *Hezekiah* by the Embaſſadours, *Iob* by loſſe of all hee hath, *Ionah* by the errand to Niniveе, *Ioſeph* by *Putefars* wife, *David* by *Shemei*, by *Nabal*. by *Mephiboſheth*, *Peter* by the Damoſell, and others of the Saints by other trialls: whether God be above their carnall delights, whether their hearts be lowly, whether they can deny their wealth, their will, whether they be that in ſecret which they are openly, what meekneſſe, patience, equality of heart is in them, whether they bee ſound and reſolved to ſtick to God, or no. None ſhall want their trials. Alas! many a poore ſoule entring upon profeſſion, lookes but from hand to mouth, how he may hold faſt the promiſe, and live according to knowledge: but lo, in a ſhort time after troubles ariſe in the married eſtate, ſickneſſe, loſſes, enemies, purſuits, wrongs: ſuch as hee expected not: On the other ſide, the Lord perhaps armes ſome ſtrong corruption to pinch and gall him, which he knowes not how to be rid of: or ſtings him by unthankfulneſſe of ſuch as owe moſt love, by unfaithfulneſſe and aloofneſſe of ſuch as have been greateſt friends; by the ſad revolts and ſcandals of ſuch as for their owne eaſe and private ends, renounce that love to Gods cauſe, and that zeale to the truth which they have teſtified: Sometimes by falſe aſperſions and reports, ſtaining them, and unjuſtly depraving them behind their backes: otherwhiles by bad times frowning upon them, and turning their proſperity into affliction. Againe, perhaps the Lord tries others by ſome hard duty, beſet with great difficulties, ſo that either they muſt forfeit conſcience, or elſe ſome deſirable thing which they are loth to forgoe. Oft-times the Lord tries ſome by company, pleaſure, liberty, occaſions of ſudden wrath, diſtemper, worldlineſſe: and infinite it were to mention all. By theſe he would let men ſee all that is in their heart; he will either diſcover their grace, that he may truſt them for ever after: or elſe their halting ſelf-ends, hollowneſſe, pride, love of themſelves, ſtrong poyſons of heart, breach of covenant, and ſo humble them & ſubdue their ſinnes for them in due ſeaſon, that they may not deceive and deſtroy their owne ſoules.

And what wonder? Doe wee thinke that God is willing to loſe his coſt? or to harbour ſuch under his roofe, as he knowes not what to make of? Such as under colour of Religion, maintaine a great deale of looſe ſcurfe within them? Is it for the glory of God to owne ſuch? No ſurely: he will put them to it one time or other, that hee may by this meane ſeparate the pretious from the vile, and their owne hay and ſtubble from his owne Pearles and Jewels. I grant, we thinke otherwiſe, and hope to eſcape in a miſt, and to carry our courſe even and faire, without any great trials or affronts: and the rather, becauſe perhaps wee have long made a ſhift to goe on ſmoothly, with praying in our families, and living quietly with our wives, hearing Sermons, and the like. But the Lord, who will have us knowne to be ſuch as feare God, and eſchew evill, and declare our ſelves to be further off from mortall ones, then ſo: will take a courſe to try us further what is in our heart. We ſee a lowd winde may long blow upon

2 Kings

Gen. 22. 2.
Eſay 38.
Job 1.
Gen. 39. 7.
2 Sam. 16. 5, & 25.
Matth. 26. 69.

Profeſſors in their novicery looke not to meet with many troubles

A note of them.
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

God will try his, to ſeparate the pretious from the vile.

2 Kings

upon a rotten tree, on the good ſide, and the tree make a ſhift to ſtand: But at laſt there comes a ſhrewd right winde, and gets into the hollow of the tree, and affronts it on the rotten ſide, and then it puts hard to it, ten to one if it lay it not under feet. Let us not then fence the hedge where it is higheſt, but where it is loweſt: ſtrengthen the feeble knees, and rectifie that which is crooked; ſeeke not praiſe to our ſelves for our gifts and labours, but know there is a greater worke lies upon us, to ſtick to our tacklings when the Lord tries us; if God will bereave us of our onely beloved luſts, and take from us the pleaſure of our heart, and that which is pretious in our eyes (as he told *Ezekiel*) if hee ſo bring it about, that we cannot have him and our credit, eaſe and carnall content alſo, then let us conſider what we have to doe, and whether we will bee faithfull or no: Now is our day of triall: now to magnifie our ſelves, and ſeek applauſe, and ſpare our owne ſelves, for eaſe, for outward reſpects, is unſeaſonable. Thinke of theſe matters ere they come: let us not be ſo buſie with cockle ſhells and toyes upon the ſea ſide, that we forget the tide, and ſo be ſwept away all on the ſudden. Deſpiſe not Gods trialls, nor put the thought of preparing for them out of our minds, as matters of leſſe import: thinke not to carry our courſe ſo ſmoothly, as that we ſhall never be moved: leſt God gaſter us with ſome ſuch enemies, as come with the neceſſity of armed men, upon naked and unprovided ones; and ſo make each veine in our hearts to ake, becauſe of our raſhneſſe; Beware leſt they make us examples unto others of more wiſdome and prevention, who might have given example to others of ſelf-deniall, uprightneſſe of heart, and truſting God in the greateſt ſtreights. For ſurely if wee do thus ſeeke to ſave our lives, we ſhall loſe them, and no great thanke for our labour: and that which we have preferred before God and peace of conſcience, ſhall come out at our noſtrils, as moſt irkeſome vomit.

Similie.

Ezek.24.16.

Matth.16.26.

Amplification of the point. John 21.

The day of triall will not bee to us as the day of our freedome and eaſe, but as our Saviour tells *Peter*; When thou wert young, thou girdedſt thy ſelfe, and wentſt where thou wouldeſt: but when thou art old, another ſhall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldeſt not. Prepare we for that day in our day of liberty. Know that Halcyon dayes will not laſt alway, but it is meet that offences and ſtumbling-blockes bee laid in our wayes to try us. And commonly when we thinke our ſelves moſt ſtapled in our eaſe, and exempted from trials, then are they at our heeles. So that it were our beſt wiſedome to ſuſpect our ſelves moſt when our way is moſt pleaſant, and our neaſt warmeſt and beſt feathered. *Iob* did thus, and when ſorrow came upon him in the midſt of his proſperity, yet it came not before it was feared. Uſe wee our beſt outward contents as if we uſed them not: and ſo, the forgoing of them ſhall not be ſo exceſſively diſtaſtfull, nor lye in our way as ſtumbling-blockes, when God ſhall try us. Behold them as things which may give us the ſlip when we leaſt looke for it. *Nero*, that tyrant, having a faire woman to his Empreſſe, would ſometimes take her by the necke, or chin, with theſe bloudy words, O goodly face and necke! but when I liſt, it ſhall be cut off. Such an Item ſhould we give our beſt contents, leſt perhaps if we truſt them to far, they ſuddenly betray us to ſorrow in forgoing, or an ill conſcience in retaining. Oh faire mercies! but when God will, they ſhall bee cut off!

Suſpect trials moſt when our eſtate ſeemes to be calmeſt.

And

And not ſo onely, but labour wee to ſtand upon good bottome, and to trade (not like banquerupts) with other mens ſtockes, (who when they breake, are found never to have been their owne men:) but with our own ſtocke, be it never ſo little, if it be good, that is, the love of God, ſoundneſſe of heart to the truth, good conſcience and faith unfained. Theſe being joyned with zeale and courage in the defence of a good cauſe, will be armour of proofe without, and a continual feaſt within, whatſoever our affronts and diſcouragements ſhall be. Faith ſhall then beare us out as a ſhield beares off blowes: and aſſure us, that let this curſed world bee never ſo diſaſtrous, yet God will keep us from abſolute ſtraits, and ſo order it, that wee ſhall not depart from his feare, nor forſake his covenant. They ſay that the Bezor (that creature which hath that cordiall ſtone) being hard hunted by the hounds, and knowing by inſtinct alſo, what it is ſhe is hunted for, (not her skin nor carcaſſe, but her ſtone) will bite off her privities, and leave them to the dogges to ſave her life. And the like I have heard ſome affirme of the Fox, that being catcht by the legge in a ſnare, ſhe wil gnaw it off, fleſh & bones, to eſcape with her life. Let us take heed of ſuch policie, to wit, when our pretious conſcience is purſued, (which to ſome *Nimrods* is a more pretious thing then the pretious life of a man to an harlot) then to bite it off and throw it to ſuch Beagles, to ſave our skin & carcaſſe: They will make themſelves as much or more ſport in rejoycing at our fleſh and nakedneſſe, then the Philiſtins did at *Sampſon* their enemy: and when we have loſt that Jewell, as poor *Reuben* ſpake of *Ioſeph*, how ſhall we behold the face of *Iacob* without confuſion? Or what ſhall it profit us to fiſh with a golden hook for a poor fiſh, and loſe it for our labour? In vain is a net laid for that which hath wing: or the deceitfull meat of the wicked ruler ſet before us to ſnare us, when we are jealous of our appetites, and put our knife to our throats.

Prov. 6. 26.

Judg. 16. 25. Gen. 37. 30.

Prov. 22. 1. 2. 3

Let us alſo (to conclude) walke in this dangerous world, as a man would walke in a place full of ſnares laid to catch him. Not onely with no purpoſe of committing evill, but with a full purpoſe and armed minde not to commit it: Watch we to the occaſions of triall: which are offered us: ſmall ones may diſcover us to bee weake, if unarmed, when ſtrong ones ſhall not foile us if watchfull. When the object of wrath, pride, contention, unmercifulneſſe, ſtrongly offers it ſelfe, let us ſtart at it, and ſay: This is to try what is in me: now had I beſt looke to my ſelfe: The Philiſtins are upon me: I ſhall this day be tried by ſubtill and lewd company, perhaps I ſhall heare the godly depraved, jeered at, ſin and baſeneſſe exalted. God keep me, if now I caſt away my weapons, I am tried to be a falſe traytor, God will truſt me no more; but if I preſerve conſcience, God will ſet his marke upon mee for one that is faithfull, as *Abraham*. I ſay, both in this, and all other caſes of triall, let us confeſſe that God may juſtly try us: for he hath put a treaſure into us, which hee will not have us to imbezzell, or betray to any enemy. We are never tried by God, but to ſift our Branne away from our Flowre, that his graces may be purer, and more pretious then Pearles. Satan indeed tempts, that hee might boult out all our Flowre, and leave nothing but Branne. Satan alſo tempts us, that he might leave us as he did *Iudas* and *Saul*, ſtript and bereft both of grace and peace, to an hardned, deſperate, impenitent ſpirit. But the Lord tries

Concluſion of all with admonition.

Seeing our way is ſo ſtrawed with ſnares, let us watch and bee armed.

Gen. 22. 12.

Looke to our peace.

Gods ends in triall, not like Satans.

2 Kings

tries us, that after he hath found us upright and faithfull he might ſet his marke upon us, of allowance; and that we might for ever walke in and out, both toward him with confidence, and within our ſelves with peace, paſſing underſtanding. Which peace, as we have procured by a good conſcience, ſo it is preſerved thereby: Therefore look not at the difficulty of a triall, but looke at the miſery which an ill conſcience, and the happineſſe and joy which a good will leave behinde it: ſuch a reward as all the fulfilling of our luſts can never afford us? Can the ſon of *Iſhai* give ye vineyards? And can your luſts equall Gods boones and bounties? Therefore let this peace of God ſo rule thee, that thou wouldſt chuſe to forgoe thy life rather then forfet it. Moreover pray dayly, not againſt trialls (for the triall of our faith and faithfulneſſe is more pretious then gold) both in reſpect of our ſelves who know not what our grace is, till we be put to triall, nor yet what corruption lurkes in us, and therefore know not in what reſpects we ſhould either be thankfull, or humbled: and of God alſo, who is honoured much in the trialls of his, and when he purpoſeth moſt to honour them, he tries them, to know them. But I ſay, pray, that the Lord would not lead us into temptation, to be foyled like ſlaves, by Satan or our luſts: And, if indeed the Lord will have us go through the brunt and purgatory, beſeech him to ſuſtaine us by his ſtrength and pitty us when we are tempted, that we may ſtand to it courageouſly and wiſely, through his ſtrength. And if we have failed in our triall with *Hezekiah* and *Peter*, let us be humbled againe after it, as the one, and repent as the other did: and ſo feele our very ſlips and faylings to be occaſions to better us, and to try, and judge our ſelves, that ſo the Lord may not judge us. And ſo much for this firſt point out of this eleventh verſe.

Phil. 4.

1 Sam. 22. 7.

1 Pet. 1. 7.

And pray that we be not led into temptation. Mat. 6. 13, 26. 41. Heb. 3. ult.

2 Cron. 32. 26. Mat. 26. ult. Eſay 38. 1 Cor 11. 28.

I proceed now to the next point in this verſe, which is one of the maine points which I intended in the chooſing this Scripture (beloved) to treate of among you. And that is the cauſe it ſelfe directly of this diſtemper of *Naaman*, the unſeaſonable ſtop of the cure expected. And that was this, that he had a ſelfe-conceit of a way of curing him, (whereof yet he had no ground) which now he is croſſed of. He confeſſeth it himſelfe at large: marke his owne words, Behold (ſaith he) I thought with my ſelfe, that he would ſurely come forth and pray to his God, and ſtrike his hand upon the place, and heale the leper. But who told him ſo? had he any warrant for it? no, none ſave himſelfe. But now, ſo deadly doth this conceit and toy of his owne braine worke with him, that being defeated, he is out of ſorts, and chuſeth rather (hearing of Gods way) to goe away uncured, then to be cured thereby: or by any way ſave his owne. The point which I commend unto you is this, when all is done, without eſpeciall prevention ſelf will defeat the ſoul of mercy. That is, although men are in a very forward likelihood of obtaining converſion, yet there may be ſome bitter root of ſelfe, which may thwart and bring it to ſmall effect. I mean not that ſuch a tech as *Naaman* took here, may do it: (for all are not as he, in point of ignorance of Gods way) but from this particular of ſelfe in him, (which was ſelfe-conceit and carnall eaſe) I gather a like concluſion of all ſelfe whatſoever, (for ſelfe is a monſter of many heads, a ſtocke of many bowes and branches.) That ſelfe may marre all the faire endea-

The maine point of this whole Text and Treatiſe.

Doct. Selfe is the enemy when all is done, which will bereave an unſound heart of grace.

A further opening of the ground. Note.

vours

vours of a man toward grace, if it be not prevented. But perhaps this doctrine will ſeeme ſtranger then the former to ſuch as conceive *Naaman* to be in no forwardneſſe toward converſion at all. To whom I anſwer as before, that the Lord intending both his cure and converſion together, ſo over-ruled all occurrents in the one reſpect, as concurring to the other, beſides and above the intention of *Naaman*. So that his jarring with the way of God in the point of his healing, was not onely a reſemblance, but a reall let of Gods worke in that greater worke of converſion.

Obiect.
Anſw.

But then it will be demanded what forwardneſſe *Naaman* was in here, which was ſo letted here by his ſelfe-conceit? I anſwer: Firſt, he was very ſenſible of his aile and malady, and laid it deeply to heart; for why? he had wealth, honour, ſtrength, and favour with his Prince; wanted nothing that might make him great: yet what were all theſe to him, having his leproſie hanging about him? Secondly, God ſends him the meſſage of a cure by ſtrange providence of a Maids report, who told him of the Prophet: and hearing thereof, what deſire of recovery doth he bewray? How eager is he to purſue it to his uttermoſt? 1. By going to his Maſter for letters of commendation and requeſt: 2. And having obtained them, furniſhing himſelf with all ſuch proviſion & rewards as he thought meet for the journey: 3. He uſeth all meanes with diligence to compaſſe this his deſire, repaireth to the King of Iſrael, the fitteſt way (as he thought) for that purpoſe; and being miſtaken in that, is glad to heare of his errour, and to mend it ſpeedily. 4. He abaſeth himſelfe (below his condition) ſo farre, as to ſtand at the Prophets doore, to crouch and creepe (in the ſenſe of his diſeaſe) for the cure thereof, with exceeding reverence to the Prophet. All which (although they might ſeem onely naturall effects of a man under trouble) yet being orderly ſteps to a greater worke, in Gods purpoſe, and ſome of them (in a ſort) religious acts of one that acknowledged a divine power to heale him, doe argue that ſomewhat was in him toward the effect. And yet, loe, here ſteps in a techie toy, that is, his prejudicate and foreſtalled heart conceited againſt the meane appointed by God: and this was, that he looked to be healed another way, more eaſie, preſent, and familiar to his humour, *viz.* that *Eliſha* himſelfe would come forth and by applying his hand to the place, worke the miracle. And this marred all the former attempts; and beſides hindred him; firſt, from marking the meſſage which contained a plaine, eaſie, mercifull, and familiar way of healing, with a charge from God to waſh, and a direct promiſe of cure thereby, without any colour or exception; all which (ſo ſolemnly delivered) might very well have pierced an heart (not exceedingly prejudiced, and deluded) both for the reverence of God, and for his owne ends. If *Eglon* an heathen King, hearing of a charge from God (no way aſſuring him of good) was ſo obeyſant, as to come off his throne, and worſhip God, how much more might *Naaman*? but lo, his preconceit letted him from it: As alſo, from ſeeing his falſe heart full fraught with rage againſt the Prophet (when yet he ſeemed to ſtoope ſo low, and doe ſo much reverence:) and (to conclude) from yeelding nakedly to the way of God, rather then to loſe his labour, and carry home his diſeaſe, and from obeying the Command.

Queſt. Was Naaman ſo forward?
Anſw. Yes, and wherein.

Yet croſſed by ſelf conceit, a toy and prich.

How?

1.

Judg 6.

2.

3.

2 Kings

Application of the ground, to the doct. in hand for the clearing of it.

What faire hopes men have.

And yet how dashed.

And juſt ſo may the caſe ſtand with ſuch as have made as many ſpirituall ſteps toward converſion, as *Naaman* did toward his cure. They may firſt be brought to a deepe plunge under ſenſe of ſinne and the curſe, and that by the word of terror, convincing their conſcience: under this they may be moſt wearisome and reſtleſſe. They may be kept from ſhaking off their terrour by other objects of pleaſure, profit or worldly contents; they may heare of a remedy by one of wiſdomes handmaids, like well of the glad tidings, long after it, make ſpeed towards it, neglect no coſt, means, or attendance upon it; joy in the turning themſelves out of their errours and miſtakes, and the appearance of more hope of eaſe: they may honor the inſtrument with exceeding reverence; wait at the poſts of wiſdome, not houres or dayes, but moneths and quarters, thinking long till ſome ſeaſonable anſwer come unto them, thinking themſelves happy that they may ſpeed at laſt, when all their labour is ended. And yet when the point ſhould come to an iſſue, and the fruit to be borne; then ſhall one ſelfe or other, either ſelfe-eaſe, or ſelfe-will, or ſelfe-wit and conceit, aſſiſted with carnall reaſon, yea, ſelfe-endeavours, ſelfe-devotion, ſelfe-mixtures of her owne with God, bereave the ſoule of all ſtrength to bring forth: one or other ſelfe (I ſay) ſhall ſtep in, or be caſt in by the divell (as the gourd into the pottage) to marre all: to ſet the chiefe worke as far behinde, as it ſeemed before to be ſet forward: in ſo much, that the voice of God both commanding to beleeve, and promiſing ſpeedy eaſe and forgiveneſſe, ſhall be as a thing farre off. And whereas the obedience of faith is, or ought to be, the upſhot of the cure: lo, this ſelfe ſhall ſo blindefolde the minde, and diſable the heart from marking, pondering, and applying the promiſe thereby, as if there were nothing in it; whereas in truth, all ſteps toward grace, without this, are frivolous: yea the baſe heart ſhall thinke this more frivolous then all the reſt; ſtumble at it, cavill, be diſcontent and flye off, as if it had wrong that her endeavours and paines be not accepted without it: which in truth, is no other then to quarrell with God, that her owne way may not be preferred to his, and ſeeing that may not be, rather to chooſe not to be healed at all, but abide ſtill in her old condition, then not to proſper by her owne way and device. I have deſired to open the point at large, becauſe I make it the ground of a large doctrine, whereof I would have none make queſtion. So much for the ground of the text.

Naamans ſelfe conceit and ours, may differ in the ſpeciall, though the ſame in kind.

But I foreſee that my hearers will by and by run to enquire whether this tech of *Naaman* be in their breſts or no, and whether it hath hindred their endeavours: and alſo, that all well affected Chriſtians would be loth to loſe their labour and ſweat (if they knew how to prevent it) till they have enjoyed the promiſe. And therefore I muſt tell them, that I gather a generall point from a particular: *Naamans* ſelfe was one branch of many; but there be many more, all as dangerous to them as this to him. Seeing then I thinke it will be deſired, that they might know the ſeverall ſorts of this monſter, and the markes of this ſecret elfe, ſelfe, I meane: therefore, ere I reaſon or apply the point, I will ſtay a while upon the diſcovery of the ſeverall ſorts of this diſeaſe, & ſo returne to the point againe (if God pleaſe) in the matter of Application. I thinke none will deny, that of all other lets of grace and ſalvation, this of ſelfe, is the moſt dangerous:

dangerous: and the reaſon is, becauſe it is moſt inward and immediate. I may ſay of it as *Paul* ſpeakes of uncleanneſſe, all other ſinnes are without the body, but this within, a diſeaſe of the intrailes and bowels. Even ſo, all other lets and enemies of Chriſt are outward; Satan hath many injections, temptations by Atheiſme, by the needleſneſſe, difficulty, yea, impoſſibleneſſe of prevailing; he hath many baſe colours to delude the heart withall by the contrariety of Chriſt to the corrupt ſpirit of man: the world alſo hath many baſe and falſe principles to beat off the heart by, as the diſdaine of them that are ſo zealous, the erroneous opinions which it hath of Chriſt and the profeſſion of his truth: but all theſe are without, and more eaſily avoided; the power of the Word ſooner ſcatters theſe miſts. The greateſt miſchiefe comes from within, and were it not for ſelfe, they could not prevaile by all their baits and feares: Selfe opens the doore and betrayes the ſoule to them. But now, to diſcerne the nature, the ſorts, and the markes of this enemy, requires ſome wiſedome; for the which worke, although the wiſeſt is moſt inſufficient, and my ſelfe unfitteſt of all; yet the neceſſity of the point laying this taske upon mee, I ſhall adventure to ſay ſo much as at leaſt may provoke others to conſider of the matter more ſeriouſly, to conſult and give ſentence.

Selfe is (to ſay truth) nothing elſe but the very ſpirit of corruption, and the inſtinct of old *Adam* in an unregenerate heart, diſcovering it ſelfe in all other kindes, but moſt eminently (for ſlineſſe and contrarineſſe) in reſiſting the worke of converſion. And it may be diſtinguiſhed into theſe two branches, either ſelfe of oppoſition to Chriſt, or ſelfe-mixture with Chriſt. The former whereof hinders the ſoule from Chriſt, by oppoſing and tendering to the ſoule a ſufficiency of her owne without Chriſt: the latter ſeemes to abhorre ſuch prophaneneſſe, and placeth onely ſufficiency to make the ſoule bleſſed in Chriſt alone: but in the point of applying and receiving thereof to it ſelfe mixeth her ſelfe with him, and ſcrues her ſelfe and her owne wayes into the ſufficiency of Chriſt. The former of theſe is more carnall and groſſe, the latter more cloſe and ſpirituall: the former impugnes the ſole-ſufficiency, the latter the all ſufficiency of Chriſt; the former the ſoule may ſooner be driven from; the latter ſhe muſt be fired out of, and (as the Fox) digged out of her burrow ere ſhe will renounce them. All Selfe is the ſpirit of corruption, but this privy ſelfe is the quinteſſence of that poyſon. All ſelfe ſets up it ſelfe againſt Chriſt; but this is the ſecret privy-chamber wherein the unregenerate ſoule imbarkes her ſelfe. For, as it is in the defence of a City againſt a beleaguering enemy, partly there be ſome out-workes, halfe-moones and retrenchments to hold the enemy at larger diſtance, and partly ſome neerer ſtronger bulwarkes and forts well manned and furniſhed with armour and Canons, in which the chiefe hopes and force of the City conſiſts: its no ſuch difficulty perhaps to drive the Citizens out of the one, but its a matter of good importance to beat them out of the other. So, I ſay of theſe two branches of Selfe; its not ſo hard a taske to diſſwade the ſoule from the former; but when the Soule runnes to her maine Fort and Caſtle, Selfe mixt with Chriſt, its an hard thing to teach her to diſcerne it, but almoſt impoſſible to fetch

Selfe, the moſt dangerous enemy, becauſe moſt inward and immediate.

1 Cor. 6. 18.

Others hurt by this moſt mortally.

Selfe what it is in the root; viz. the inſtinct of old Adam.

Selfe of two ſorts: either oppoſite ſelfe to Chriſt, or mixt with him.

Note.

Simil.

2 Kings

her out of it. The onely wiſedome and omnipotency of grace can effect that.

Though the latter be chiefly aimed at: The former of theſe two occaſionally entred upon.

Concerning the former of theſe two my Doctrine leſſe aimes at, becauſe it takes for granted that a man ſo qualified as I have already ſpoken acknowledges himſelfe inſufficient of himſelfe to get bleſſednesſe. My chiefe ſcope is to encounter the latter; yet for light and diſtinction ſake I will point at the ſeverall kindes of the former, that the Reader may not be unſatisfied about the object of the whole intended diſcourſe. For the former then which is more groſſe: this is of five ſorts; prophane ſelfe, naturall ſelfe, carnall ſelfe, ſelfe in the creature, and religious ſelfe. Firſt of the firſt.

Five ſorts of it.
1. Prophane ſelfe.
2. Naturall ſelfe.
3. Carnall ſelfe.
4. Creature ſelfe.
5. Religious ſelfe.

Fire (we know) is put out by pulling away the fewell, but eſpecially by caſting on of water: ſo, all ſelfe oppoſes Chriſt, but above all ſelfe-luſts, or ſelfe reſolved to live in any ſin, doth abandon and expell Chriſt, who indeed came to deſtroy ſinne and him that reigned thereby. Therefore ſinne and Sathan held and maintained, doe moſt punctually deſtroy Chriſt. True it is, ſinne (alone and nakedly conſidered) ſerves to magnifie grace; for where ſinne abounded grace exceeded, and where ſinne is out of meaſure ſinfull, grace is out of meaſure gracious: but where ſinne abides in the heart as in her center and element, loved and lived in, there Chriſt is quite ſhut out of doores. Sinne is not alike dwelling in all, but in ſome men it dwels without a law, ignorantly, inconvincedly; in others it rules againſt a law, rebelliouſly; and ſo the enmity of it to Chriſt doth differ in degree: howbeit in all ſuch as it dwels in, it oppoſeth Chriſt in a direct kinde of contrariety. Hence the Apoſtle demandeth what agreement betweene Chriſt and Beliall, the beleever and the infidell? light and darkeneſſe, ſinne, and that grace that pardons and purges it? And our Saviour, They loved darkneſſe rather then light, becauſe their workes were evill. Alas! ſuch come not at Chriſt ſo much as in the remote meanes or Ordinances by their good will, or at leaſt for meere faſhion: much leſſe to the promiſe of Chriſt, to ſave them. They are alive, jolly, merry, well ſatisfied already: give them their drinke, their harlot, their world, and god Mammon, their belly, eaſe, pleaſures, or like luſts; they are well, and for the reſt, they leave it to ſuch as care for it: as for themſelves, their hell is their heaven, and Chriſt is not ſo ſweet to a needing ſoule, as that which Chriſt came to deſtroy, is ſweet to them, till the Lord ſcare them and bid them goe to their al-ſufficient luſts for ſalvation. Either they know no better, or love no better. If Chriſt ſhould come in, the kingdome which the Divell hath ſet up, and the ſcepter he ſwayeth in their ſoules, by their prophaneneſſe, breach of Sabbaths, atheiſme, pride, contention, diſdaine, intemperancy, incontinency, ſwearing, uncleanneſſe, and the like, muſt (as that ſtrong man) be caſt out by the ſtronger, and ſpoiled. And that were as ſad and uncouth to them, as the comming of thoſe Danites and ſtealing away *Mica's* gods was irkeſome to him: his joy, and ſtrong hold, al-ſufficient treaſure was ſtollen, and poore wretch, what ſhould it boot one ſo woe begone, to live? The laſt and chiefe reſt and content of a ſinner, being his luſts, muſt needs cauſe Chriſt, who comes to robbe the ſoule thereof, to be accounted as he who robbes a Beare of her whelpes. Sinne and luſt to ſuch a

1. Prophane ſelfe what?

2 Cor.6.16.

Ioh.3.19.

man

man is as the Lambe brought up in the boſome (as *Nathan* ſaith) and being as his darling & his ſon. Hence it is, that the ſufficiency of theſe luſts, auſe the ſufficiency of Chriſt (which ſtands in the ſetling of a ſoul upon a ſufficiency in pardon, peace and joy of conſcience) to be abhorred.

I would have no man miſtake me, as if I hereby did eſtabliſh a doctrine of repentance before faith: ſundry miſtaken Scriptures have deluded the erroneous judgements of ſome Divines to thinke, that becauſe ſinne expels Chriſt, therefore repentance entertaines him: (men of unhappy aimes,) who cannot avoid one rocke, ſave by ruſhing upon another; I confeſſe in the place alleaged, *Paul* cites theſe words out of the Prophet, Depart and goe from among them and I will receive you, and be a father unto you, and you ſhall be ſonnes and daughters of me, ſaith the Lord Almighty. But this text ſheweth not that repentance is a ſtep to the receiving of a man by faith and adoption: but rather it diſcovers this, That till the Lord had humbled and abaſed the Iewes for their idolatry, and ſetting up of falſe gods againſt himſelfe, and committing ſpirituall filthineſſe with them, there was no hope of being received into favour or marriage with him. Otherwiſe, repentance and turning from idols to God, and from darkeneſſe and the kingdome of Sathan, to Chriſt, preſuppoſeth faith to purge the conſcience, and to make us beloved and accepted. The ſumme briefely is, That this point urgeth us not to repent ere we beleeve (which were to overthrow the need of a Chriſt, and then to come to Chriſt) but to ſhew us that ere ever Chriſt be truely cloſed with, ſinne muſt be nipt in the necke. That jollity, content and heartseaſe which a ſinner found in his luſts, muſt be throwne out both litter and whelpes of his heart, ere ever he come to behold Chriſt with his ſufficiency to ſave. One wombe cannot at once carry two conceptions, and the ſoule cannot at once ſerve two maſters, God and Mammon, Chriſt and luſts. The ſufficiency which luſts erroneouſly afforded to the ſoule, making her deeme her ſelfe happy in them; and to be as a man of a full ſtomacke who loathes a honey-combe, muſt be abandoned by legall conſternation, and humbling, ere Chriſt be precious. Chriſt muſt be needed as meat by a ſterne belly, ere ever he be had. But that he cannot be, while the love of luſts, lived in, ſurfeits the appetite. And this is the firſt of thoſe branches in which groſſe-ſelfe conſiſts.

Repentance goes not before faith.

Of which, this I ſay; Oh! that it ſhould be poſſible, that ſuch a nature as was firſt created with a ſoule capable of divine being, and bred to immortality, ſhould ſo debauch it ſelfe, and loſe her honour, as (not with *Nebuchadnezzar* to forgoe his throne to feed with beaſts) but to forfeit Gods image to become a beaſt! Nay, I wrong a beaſt to ſpeake ſo: to become worſe then any ſwine or beaſt, and to wallow and incorporate it ſelfe ſo into ſpirituall filth, as to forget what it was ever borne unto: and not onely ſo far to degenerate as to embrace the enemy of God, and that which Chriſt came to deſtroy; but to ſet up ſuch a ſufficiency to it ſelfe in it, as to aboliſh that ſole-ſufficiency of mercy to pardon and purge it! yet this I ſay of it, that although ſinne of her owne nature, and in her courſe, tends by degrees to defile, harden, and make the ſoule impenitent and deſperate: yet if God breake off the ſoule betimes from it, ere it have cankerfretted the ſoule, it is more eaſie for ſuch a ſinner to

The degenerateneſſe of our nature diſcovered.

come to ſome ſence, conviction and humiliation for it, and ſo to ſome need of pardon, then many a Phariſee who under pretence of abhorring odious Publicans and offendors, is riveted into a conceit of his owne righteouſneſſe: both a Phariſee and a Publican oppoſe Chriſt; yet the former more then the latter, becauſe Chriſt came not to call the righteous, but the ſinner to repentance. And ſo much of this, ſo farre as this Digreſſion will permit.

The ſecond ſelfe naturall, or the civilian.

I proceed to the ſecond, that is, to the meere Naturaliſt, or Civilian. By whom I meane ſuch an one as lives upon dregges, the very reliques and ruines of the image of God decayed. To open my ſelfe briefely, the Lord out of infinite mercy hath ſo diſpenſed and ordred the penalties due to ſinne, in the fallen condition of *Adam*; that, although the wrath and curſe of God upon the ſame lye equally upon all his poſterity, yet for ſome ends, his owne mercifull indulgence, and the commodity of common life, he hath in ſome perſons reſtrained the flood-gates of this deluge, ſo that ſinne hath a limitation and bound ſet unto it, both for ſundry kindes and meaſures of it. Some being more innocent, harmeleſſe, righteous, juſt, temperate, ſober, curteous, civill then others: which vertues, although they are as pearles in a ſwines ſnout, planted in a curſed nature, out of which nothing can proceed, ſave that which is uncleane (for the cleareſt water in a ſtanding kennell or puddell, though it differ from the mudde underneath, yet ſavours of the ſame ſtinch) yet comparatively ſeeming to be leſſe ill and impure, then the muddy and baſe luſts of the uncleane, the prophane and openly wicked; obtaine among men the repute and opinion of vertues. And indeed ſo they are, in order and reſpect to the welfare of a Commonwealth: in which, its no ſmall outward beauty and happineſſe, to live with ſuch, in reſpect of the fierce, injurious, noyſome and hurtfull qualities of the lewd and wicked. And this favour of Nature in many men, is greatly enlarged by ſundry meanes.

The flood-gates of corruption reſtrained by providence.

Favour of nature is inlarged by many meanes, in the naturall civilian.

1. By good Lawes.

Firſt, by the lawes of men, which tend to ſettle civility, and innocency in their governments; which having penalties annexed to them ſeverely cenſuring delinquents, cauſe the ſelfe-loving ſpirit of fleſh, partly from a confeſſed goodneſſe in the vertues themſelves, partly from feare of puniſhment, and partly a love of praiſe and reputation among men (who count ſuch rare peeces) to cloze therewith, to curbe and keepe in their diſtempers, and to accommodate themſelves to the order of community.

2. By education and Diſcipline.

Secondly, by the inſtitution and diſcipline of Moraliſts, inſtilling into their diſciples, the ſeeds of vertue and outward life, propounding rewards of commendation and honour to ſuch as attaind them: ſhame and reproach to ſuch as enſued them: in which kinde thoſe heathen Maſters of manners excelled. For, by your continuall foſtering thoſe ſparkles of nature left upon the herth, and laying together ſuch principles of art, as they preceived to make for the engendring and nouriſhing thereof in mens mindes (eſpecially their tender novices not being leavened before with luſts) they got ſuch a perfection, both in negative abſteinings from evils, and poſitive performances of duties, as may juſtly make even Chriſtians to tremble, that they ſhould come ſo farre ſhort of them both, in ſubduing of paſſions, and practice of ſelfe-denying vertues, being under the diſcipline of Chriſt himſelfe.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, others by their experience which their induſtry and obſervation of politicke courſes among men hath purchaſed unto them, have obtained ſuch meaſure of perfection in this kinde, that they have beene able to rule others by the authority of their skill and carriage, and to containe townes, corners and Kingdomes in peace and order: which being ſo extenſive a good (within her compaſſe) muſt needs cauſe men to imagine ſome excellency therein.

3. By their experience.

Fourthly, the rare parts and endowments of ſuch as are thus qualified (excelling in ſhew the vertues of ſome ſuch as are in an higher ranke of chriſtianity and religion, and blemiſhing their weaker qualities) muſt needs reflect upon them, more then ordinary eſteeme among ſuch as behold them; & eſpecially when they ſhall bewray more bounty, liberality, compaſſion and mercy, forbearance and patience, with other uſefull and admired vertues, then they who claime the chiefe name goodneſſe.

4. The examples and opinion of men rarely vertuous.

Fifthly, when beſides all theſe Civilities and Moralities, they adde ſome varniſh and luſtre from a tincture of Religion, keeping their Church, applauding a forme of ſerving God, and diſcourſing of ſuch matters: which although they doe not for any perfiring of their vertues, (which they count to be their ſtrong hold) but onely for complement and formality, yet hereby they ſtop the mouthes of any who might brand them with irreligion and prophaneneſſe. Adde hereto, the ſimilitude which they ſeeme to hold with the godly; for they alſo have their ſlips and errors, ſometime blemiſhes of note, and vices of deepe dye: and alas! theſe have no more, and thereforeſo long as outſides only may hold water, there will ſeeme little difference.

5. Some tincture of religion.

6. Similitude with the godly.

There are none ſo bad and baſe, but have ſome ſhreds of goodneſſe in them. *Ioab* a vile, cruell and bloody wretch, yet a valiant Captaine who fought Gods battels, and was uſefull to the Church in deſtroying the enemies of it. *Saul* a notorious hypocrite and ſelf-lover, yet adorned with abundance of heroicall, martiall, politique and morall vertues, wiſedome, awe and authority, courage and reſolution, equity and juſtice, love to his followers, till his ſpirituall treachery of heart, quaſht them. *Eſau* himſelf had his reſtraint of malice, and ſo had *Haman* till their fitter opportunity. And in a word, as there are few ſo good, but they have their tincture of ſome evill: ſo, neither are there any ſo bad, but they have ſome morall reliques left in them of vertue and praiſe. And this cauſeth them (through a baſe heart balking God in his way of Chriſt) to reſt themſelves ſatisfied in that ſufficiency which they finde in theſe things; as thinking they neede ſeeke no further for any ſuperiour happineſſe, becauſe they finde this to give them ſo abundant content, both from within and from without, feeling theſe feathers and colours of their owne both to heat and to adorne them. And the truth is, this ſelfe of morality and nature is ſo much the more dangerous, by how much (in ſhew) it ſeemes ſo glorious: for how vaſt a gulfe ſeemes to be betweene the former vicious, forlorne caitiffe, and this painted moraliſt? Alas! nothing is more apt to puffe up a naturall man, then the abuſed privity to a former eſtate of excellency: ſuch and ſuch they were bred, and although they have loſt all, yet their breed, and the reliques of their old ruines are enough to make them ſome body. As we ſee it in them who having bin well bred, and fallen to

No ne ſo bad, but ſome ſhreds of good may be found in them. 2 Sam. 12. 27. 1 Sam. 11. 7. Gen. 29 41. And what uſe a civill perſon makes of it.

Simil.

to decay, though they have nothing to take too, yet even in the neceſſity of forced begging. beg with indignation at the baſeneſſe of it, and will ſay, good Sir ſhew ſome reſpect to a poore Gentleman, putting on their hat inſtantly, and ſcorning to bee as they are: even ſo is it here, That which ſhould moſt abaſe us, doth moſt pride us, our very ruines ſeeme rarities unto us, and nouriſh a ſufficiency of our owne in us, ſo that wee cannot reſigne it up and throw it at the feete of Chriſt, to purchaſe a better. But then much more prone are we to be puft up, if we thinke that wee have raiſed our fortunes to a pretty eſtate the ſecond time, by our owne improvements and induſtry: None are prouder then ſuch as being privy to their ruined eſtate of creation, yet make themſelves beleeve, that by their owne worth, they have raiſed themſelves from it to a very faire competency of eſtate in morall and civil vertues: others remaining ſtill in their beggery of viciouſneſſe and baſe evills.

Uſe of the point.

Briefly then of this ſecond ſort, this I adde, Oh how lamentable is it, that a man borne to bee a ſonne of God, and beautified with his owne image ſhould become ſo diſguiſed, as having loſt grace in the ſubſtance, to reſt in a meere ſhadow thereof, deſtitute of a principle of divine life and goodneſſe! and to ſtay all ſuch from their conceit of ſelfe-ſufficiency herein: let me tell them, firſt their vertue is copper coine, and wants of the nature of gold as much as kennel water of the pureneſſe of ſpring water: therefore their ſufficiency is but a dreame, a fruit of their ignorance, and owlelight of diſcerning: nay it is but a madneſſe, as he muſt be a foole who really can ſatisfie himſelfe in counters as if they were peeces. Secondly, there is no ſafety herein, for the error of their conceit may more harden them againſt Chriſt, then the prophaneſſe of the wickedſt, if God vouchſafe them both equall light. Thirdly, if God leave them in this hardneſſe of heart, they may prove as deſperate oppoſites and purſuers of all grace of Chriſt, and Chriſtians, as the moſt horrible open ſwine, yea worſe, as we ſee in *Saul* and *Iulian*. Therefore (to conclude) let all ſuch know, that till the Lord have lighted a torch by his word of a greater diſcovery of themſelves, then yet they have ſeene, they are farre off from the embracing of Chriſt, they are wedged already into ſo deepe a ſufficiency of their owne, that Chriſts is unſavory. And therefore, although I will not adviſe them to renounce the vertues themſelves, nor judge them as vile as open offenders: yet I wiſh them to come under a better banner, and caſt their owne worth upon the dunghill. They are gone up to heaven by a ladder of their owne framing and ſetting: But they muſt come downe each ſtep thereof with more ſhame and confuſion, ere they can ſet one ſtep towards Chriſts ladder: in which reſpect I ſee not but he who ſtands upon the ground ſtill, and never went higher, is ſomewhat nearer the bottome of Chriſts ladder then they. And ſo much alſo of this ſecond kinde of groſſe ſelfe, *viz.* ſelfe-naturall morality: I come to the third:

A civill eſtate dangerous.

The third carnality or fleſhly ſavor. Rom.8.6.

And that is carnality, or fleſhly ſavor: of the which I ſpake ſomewhat in the tenth verſe, & ſhall ſay more in verſe twelve: Here therefore I will onely touch the point, and ſhew wherein this groſſe ſelfe oppoſeth Chriſt. Its true of all carnall ſavor which *Paul* ſpeakes, that its enmity to God: and why? becauſe its prophane and oppoſes his holineſſe. But its

its enmity to Chriſt alſo in another reſpect, to wit his alſufficiency to ſave: and why? becauſe it hath a deepe ſelfeſufficiency, and needes nothing: Its carried in a ſtreame and ſmooth way of it owne, its full of it ſelfe, and we know whatſoever is powred into a full veſſell runnes over. There is no peece of ſelfe more groſly oppoſite, becauſe none more abounds in it owne ſenſe: and when it can enjoy it ſelfe, its happy in it owne eſteeme, but if croſſed, hath no joy in being. Take ſuch a carnall mans ſufficiency from him, and he is as one that hangs in the aire. Underſtand it in a few inſtances, the prophanely carnall or Atheiſt, the worldly carnall, the learnedly carnall and ſuch as are well parted and the ſelfeloving: theſe will give a taſte of the reſt. For the firſt, the carnally prophane perſon having fleſhly wiſdome enough, perhaps policy, skill in the law, wealth at will, place and authority to backe him, how doth he ſcorne and diſdaine Chriſt, his religion and members? As thoſe jolly Captaines ſitting in councell of warre with *Iehu*, ſeeing the Prophets ſervant comming to him, asked what made this mad fellow with thee? 1.King.9. and *Gallio* ſitting as judge of right and wrong, hearing the queſtion of the Jewes againſt the Apoſtles, ſcorned them, and drave them from his Tribunall. Act.18.14. As *Herod* and his men ſcorned Chriſts perſon as a meane ſilly man to be a King: ſo doe prophane carnalliſts ſcorne his religion and members.

Alas! the very garbe of Chriſt and Chriſtianity is odious, they ſtumble in the porch, and never get into the houſe. They feele a reall bottome of fleſh to ſubſiſt upon, which is their deep pollicy, that they can give counſell in weighty matters, foreſee outward dangers, judge of difficult caſes betweene man and man, ſway others by their authority and terrors, they ſee all glad to ſtoope to their lure, and this makes them admire themſelves: as for Chriſt, alas! he is a ſpirituall ſubject more fit for ſuch as live in a Cloiſter, affecting a contemplative life, or for Gods fooles! Tuſh! (ſay they) we ſcorne ſuch fancies as thoſe, to deny our ſelves, to beleeve a promiſe, to live upon breath, and caſting all our own ſufficiency away, to rely upon Chriſt and the word: wee love reall contents and ſatisfaction, ſuch as will hold water in the world; make us eſteemed and wiſe in mens conceits: and ye ſhall obſerve ſuch as theſe, out of this ſwelling fulneſſe of their owne, behold Chriſt as a man upon the top of a pinacle beholds little children playing; yea even as mice running our of their holes. As for preaching, they chuſe to heare none at all, but if they muſt for faſhion needes heare any, then they muſt be ſuch as in whom more favor of mans wiſdome appears, then power of Chriſt: ſuch as preach quaint things, faire and far off, pleaſing conceits, ſuch as leave them as they found them, and touch not their ſores. Offer them a man that preaches Chriſt or walkes in the ſpirit of humility and ſelfedeniall, and they count him a foole: (even as the carnall Jew and Gentile, counted Chriſt himſelfe folly, and a ſtumbling blocke) geering and gibing all that comes in the likeneſſe of Chriſt or uprightneſſe.

The carnall wiſe ſcorne Chriſt.

Secondly, the like I may ſay of a carnall wordling; hee is as full as his skin can hold of his owne ſufficiency. Aske him of bargaines, Lordſhips and purchaſes, great marriages and matches, or tell him of ſome great meetings, feaſts, paſtimes and pleaſures, company of jolly folkes

1 Cor.1.24. Carnall wordling full of himſelfe.

2 Kings

folkes talking of newes or meriments to ſpend their time, or of any other thing that ſavors of the world, and ye ſhall have him in his element, prophane, perhaps, they will not be (except it be now and then expedient) but as for Chriſt and his ſufficient ſalvation, they count it but a fulſome object, never well till ſuch talke be over; and by their good wills, they would not ſit in company where ſuch matters are ſtirring: to be ſure, they are beſt when they are eaſed & gone. If they love a Chriſtian preacher or profeſſor, its for ſome carnall favor they find in his outſides, his learning, curteſie, mirth or complement: but elſe the world loves her own and ſuch as favor the things of this life: And by this means, they pleaſe themſelves ſo deeply in the ſufficiency and content which they get from the ſpirit of the world; that (although perhaps their conſciences ſometime pinch them for the vanity of this their ſufficiency, yet) the ſpiritualneſſe and preciſeneſſe of Chriſt is a burthen to them which they will not touch with their leaſt finger.

Carnallity of good parts an enemy to Chriſt.

Come in the third place to the carnallity and favor of good parts and endowments; and we ſhall finde it a woefull oppoſite to Chriſt, filling men with ſuch ſufficiency of their own, that Chriſt is a meere ſuperfluity with them. They bewray this ſickneſſe (many of them) by the impotency of their pride and ſelfeconceit: they are as drunkards overcharged with wine, they know not how to carry themſelves, or to walke upon the ground. As *Feſtus* baſely ſpake of *Paul*, Much learning makes thee mad: ſo I may truly ſay of theſe, their parts and gifts doe ſo overpower them in conceit of their owne ſufficiency, that it makes them to turn mad humoriſts. And whence is that? ſurely from the impotency of that pride that is unable to keepe within bounds of moderation, and ſo muſt be within boundleſſeneſſe of humor. It was noted of *Diogenes*, that monſter of pride, that comming to *Plato* his houſe at a feaſt time, ſeeing there goodly cuſhions and tapiſtry, he tooke them and trodde on them, ſaying I trample upon *Plato* his pride; but he was well anſwered, that hee did it with a farre greater pride of his owne. Many worthy Grandees for their worth and skill in their faculties, Law, Phyſicke, Divinity, and other profeſſions have beene overthrowne this way, I meane by ſickneſſe of ſelfe-love and ſelfe-admiration. Some ſcorning preferment, not out of humility, but as thinking it under them; and becauſe its the uſuall portion of Paraſites or the reward of ſome who are ſo farre below themſelves. Others affecting ruſticall carriages or cynick qualities meane attire, little applauſe, ſmall requitalls, and diſdaining gifts and praiſe, onely to be pointed at, and becauſe they enjoy themſelves, with farre more ſufficient content, then others can ſatisfie them. And its hard to finde rare parts without ſuch tinctures: and we have ſeene the raſh adventures of ſuch, as out of the ambition to be thought ſuch, have ruſht themſelves upon ſuch rocks as have ſplit them: falſely pretending zeale, but indeed ſacrificing to their owne nets.

Acts 26.24.

This appeares in petty matters well as great.

How many men of learning and much reading, are ſo full of it, that they diſdaine at ſuch as goe beyond them in preaching or power of Religion? They have read more bookes (they ſay if you beleeve them) then ten of theſe preciſe preachers and zealous fellowes: and this puffes them up in their own opinions; and indeed they who preach little (if their eaſe

eaſe will ſuffer it) may read much. Thoſe Phariſees who ſate in their ſchools reading their profound lectures of the Law, and having their novices ſitting at their feete, (as *Paul* did at *Gamaliels*) teaching them their Cabala, that is, their dreames, traditions, and Rabbinicall obſervations: when they ſaw the Lord Jeſus and his Diſciples goe up and downe, preaching and abaſing themſelves to the reach of the poore people, diſdained him, as a man of no learning: they were ſtuft ſo full of their own skill and knowledge, that they ſcorned his ſimplicity. If they now lived, they would preferre the waſhing of their cups and platters before preaching of Chriſt and repentance. Tuſh, (ſay thoſe Phariſees *Iohn 9.*) Thou art borne in ſinnes, and ſhouldeſt thou teach us? This people knoweth not the Law, and is accurſed. Oh! Camels cannot enter into a needles eie, nor a man puft up in himſelfe, into the Kingdome of God. How doe ſuch as theſe beare downe preaching, eſpecially twice on the Lords day, and ſcorne them who doe ſo, as idots and dunces? And to conclude, this diſeaſe creepes into the meaneſt, even poore Tradeſmen, if they have better parts then others, to remember and repeate ſermons, to ſpeake or pray in company, (if there be not ſpeciall grace) how it makes them to bubble & ſwell? I may ſay, the very braine knowledge of Chriſt, hath ſo puft up many, that they never came to ſee need of him to ſalvation: but if they may be all in all in meetings, and heare themſelves talke, and others admire them for their parts, and none contradict them, Oh this is their fools Paradiſe! This makes them think themſelves ſelfe ſufficient, and to need nothing. Nay for a need skill in mens trades may doe it.

1 Cor. 1.

Matth. 23.25.

Joh. 9.

The fourth ſort is of ſuch as who ſtand upon their greatneſſe and ſuperiority over others in Towns and places. They looke upon themſelves as the chiefe hinges whereon the doore turns, and they beare the purſe, others are wholly beholding to them for maintaining the poore, for upholding the Goſpell; they beare all charges, and the whole ſway of government; and as for others, they are of the poorer ſort, and may well be ſpared, men of ſmall judgement, experience or ability to doe any thing; and this makes them ſwell in the pride of themſelves, and to ſeem great in their own opinion, though alas! they are ſo only in compariſon of the meaneſt, and being conſidered in themſelves are but ſilly and meane ones: what would theſe be if they were Magiſtrates, Juſtices and Rulers of the Country? If ſo ſmall a thing make them ſo jolly and ſufficient in themſelves, what would theſe be if birth, nobleneſſe, worſhip, honour, dignity and reputation in the Country, filled their veines with ranker blood, and their ſpirits with greater ſtomack? And (to end) the like I may ſay of the favor of ſelfelove, and of ſuch, as being wholly wedded to themſelves, and narrowly ſpying out all occaſions for their own ends, how their eaſe, welfare, maintenance, eſteeme and credit, life, living and liberty, gaine and thrift, gifts and parts may be ſupported; neglect others, and let all ſinke or ſwim; ſo they may ſubſiſt, what care they? I ſay of theſe (for brevity ſake) as of the former, they are full of themſelves, and looke at a ſufficiency in themſelves, and therefore the Lord Jeſus, (who ſerves for none, ſave them that are poore, baſe and deſolate muſt needs be an unſavory morſell unto them.

Carnall favor in ſuperiority or greatneſſe, what.

How dangerous.

And

2 Kings

Admonition to theſe former ſorts.

And therefore in a word to admoniſh them, this I ſay, conſider all ſuch carnal and ſelfe ſufficient ones, when the evill day ſhall come, what ſhall all thy pride and prophane diſdaine, thy worldly wiſdome, thy parts and greatneſſe, thy ſelfelove profit thee? Alas! they onely ſerve here during the time of health and proſperity, and the ſeaſon of the Goſpel, to damme up the paſſages of thy ſoule from Chriſt: but when once ſickeneſſe, ſorrow and death approach, their image ſhall bee deſpiſed, and they will become burdenſome: Then ſhall they cry out, now we ſee, the humble, the poore in ſpirit, the unlearned, the meane in account, and ſuch as have little to loſe, are all in all: now they who denied themſelves and ſought to be ſufficient in Chriſt alone, are the happy men: Then ye ſhall wiſh your ſelves as little, as ever before ye affected greatneſſe, then ſhall yee wiſh your ſelves had rather been by-words and outcaſts for Chriſt, then to have ſcorned the ſimplicity of Chriſt; Then ſhall ye wiſh your Camels bunch (that deepe opinion ye had of your parts, learning and greatneſſe) were pared off: Then when ye ſhall hear God pronounce ſentence, you were too great for the narrow gate of heaven, men of too great parts, wiſdome, policy, and ſelfelove for Chriſt, then I ſay, you ſhall be ſicke at the ſtomacke of all theſe, and vomit your ſweet morſels, and all your Quailes, and objects of ſufficiency ſhall come out at your noſtrills, yea vaniſh before the ſufficiency of Chriſt. Then ſhall you wiſh with *Paul*, Oh! that all things which I counted ſo precious, had beene dung and dogs meate, that I might have wonne Chriſt, and beene found in him, empty of my fulneſſe: Oh! that I had deſired to know nothing ſave Chriſt crucified, and that his fulneſſe had left no ſpirit in me, as *Solomons* wiſdome in the Queene of Sheba: Oh! that all my beſt parts had ſerved Chriſt, as too baſe to attend him, and not ſcorned him as too baſe for them: Thus you ſhall doe then, but who knowes whether then it will not be too late? ſure it is, if ever Chriſt and his ſufficiency become ſweet, the Lord will purge you of your Laodicean temper the whilſt: he will make you hungry, baſe, naked and empty, that you may buy of him gold, ſilver, apparell, and all ſufficiency to ſalvation: pull downe your proud ſtomacks: be fooles that ye may be wiſe: prick and let out the wind of your empty bladders, and caſt downe your Scepters and Crownes at the feet of Chriſt, that he may lift ye up. And ſo much for this third branch of groſſe ſelfe, carnallity or ſavor of the fleſh. Touching carnall reaſon I ſhall ſpeake in verſe 12.

Phil.3.

1 King.10.

Revel.3.18.

Senſuall ſelfe or the creature, what.

The fourth followeth, and that is ſelfe in the creature, or in outward things: As in the bleſſings of marriage, of health, of long life, ſucceſſe in our earthly matters, skill in the world, conveniency of dwelling, abundance of eaſe, ſleepe, friends, pleaſures, content in our eſtate and wealth, fatting, welfare, diet, attendance, fulneſſe of outward accommodations, victory over our oppoſites, freedome from croſſes, elbowroome in the world, acceptation with our betters, favor with ſuch as can helpe us in our ſtraits, unlooked for gaines, and overplus of commodities meete for the uſe of this life, not onely for need but for delight. Theſe (both all of them, and any of them) have a marveilous agreeing nature in them with the corrupt ſenſuall appetite of man; and therefore eaſily incorporate with our ſpirit, and tickle the fleſh, ſo that as a girdle full

The creature is very apt to tickle and ſatisfie the corrupt heart of man.

enough

enough for the loines, eaſily compaſſeth the body, and keepes it cloſe within the compaſſe thereof; even ſo this ſenſuality and groſe ſelfe of the creature eaſily begirts the heart and compaſſes it with delight therein: ſo that it muſt bee a marvelous ſtrong convincement from an higher cauſe, which muſt diſſwade, unſettle and gaſter the ſoul from ſuch a ſufficiency. As muſicke through the familiarity of it to the eare and ſence, doth ſo pleaſe it for the time that it is led from ſerious thoughts and objects of worth, and is taken up and poſſeſſed wholly with it: ſo, the comfort & warmth of the creature in every kind (and the more the worſe) hath a marveilous attractiveneſſe, inchantment and unſuſpectedneſſe in it, to ſatisfie the ſoul with it ſelfe, and cauſeth it (while its warmed in this neſt) to ſay with that Epicure, I am as I would bee, and I wiſh no better: Alas! what wonder? The ſoules miſery is not only in this, that ſhe hath loſt her true Paradiſe: but that ſhee is alway hankering, and catching at every ſhadow and vanity, in hope to lay hold upon the Paradiſe ſhe hath loſt: ſhe dreames that ſhe had one, and ſhould have one, but what an one ſhe hath loſt, or what ſhe ſhould recover, ſhe knowes not, ſhe gropes as one ſmitten with blindneſſe, about the doore, but cannot hit upon it, the further ſhe wanzes, the further off ſhe is from true content; But to bee ſure that true Sufficiency and Paradiſe of grace, ſhee hath no appetite after it.

Nay any falſe vanity and moſt lying content in all the world, is enough to cheat and to ſeduce the heart from faſtning upon it. Again, we ſee, that men can finde a ſecret ſatisfaction to themſelves to bee as they are, (to the end they might rid themſelves of any further care after a ſufficiency of Chriſt) although they have no earthly content in the world to ſtill them: nay perhaps when ſickneſſe, poverty, ſhame, debt, ſorrow and all miſery at once environs them: hope of freedome kepes their carnall heart from burſting, be it never ſo farre off: and if any thing in the world, even the very rags on a mans backe, or a cruſt to feed the belly, yea if it be but moone ſhine in the water which a man can catch at, it is enough: any thing rather then Chriſt, nay any bable to avoide Chriſt will ſerve the turne. What wonder then, when a deluded heart can faſten upon any reall contentment to fleſh (be it never ſo farre from ſpiritualneſſe) as eaſe and welfare, or the like, if I ſay, it greedily catch at that, and ſatisfie it ſelfe with it, ſeeking no further? But if it have variety and choice of theſe to repoſe content in, ſo farre may we be from wondring at men ſatisfying themſelves herein, that rather we may ſtand and wonder, that ever the Lord ſhould ſo powerfully breake in upon the ſoule, as to gaſter it from ſuch a ſelfe ſufficiency, convince her of her nakedneſſe, and pull her from her owne, to ſeeke a ſufficiency in Chriſt. And there is reaſon for it. For this like a viper, ſtinges the ſoule to death by ſweetneſſe. Perhaps the former ſorts of groſſe ſelfe admit ſome checks and ſtings of conſcience, through the corruption thereof: But theſe, being the good creatures of God, and lawfull both for kind, uſe, and abundance, yea for a competent delight in them (if we could hit upon it rightly) doe; without any ſuſpicion, with a ſmoothneſſe and facility carry the heart into the ſtream of their ſufficiency and ſenſuality, and ſo choak all longing or deſire after Chriſt. Perhaps every one is not ſo groſſe as he who ſold

Hath a peculiar deceit in it unſuſpected.

2 Kings

his birthright for pottage, nor to say, to the wedge of gold, Thou art my God: This all would confesse to be horrible, and to deny the Almighty in plaine tearmes: but when men can joyne these with the Almighty, and yoke them (as men do horses and oxen in drawing of the same plough) to draw the affections of their soules equally, to love and satisfie themselves in, (as what is more easie, then to cosen the heart with this error) Oh then! how hard is it to cure such selfe in the creature, or to shew it the baseneſſe of such a sufficiency? Any thing serves a base heart which hath lost her savour.

Iob 32.

Further illustration of this.

That which is spoken of Laodicea, agrees to this selfe, even literally. Thou saiest I am rich and cloathed, and needest nothing. Its the secret voice (though all will not speake out) of worldly wealthy ones, and of all others of the same ranke before named (each feather being of the nature of this nest of selfe) *viz.* I am sufficient of my selfe and neede nothing. Rich and jolly worldlings ascribing that to their wealth and to the creature, which is the Creators due, that is to put their confidence and trust therein, and not the living God; and to turne the glory of Christ (which is uncorruptible) into the image of a base creature, to make it her all in all, her fullnesse, her sufficiency, and so seekes no further. A carnall heart never stands to question what the difference is betweene the content of the creature and the comfort of Christ: alas! it hath lost that savour, and cannot see a far off, therfore rests it selfe as *Terah* and his company on the other side of the river, and never comes over it with *Abraham*, to the land of promise. Behold in the creature shee will set up her rest. And sutable to this is that of the wise man, The rich mans riches, is his strong hold: not only to hide himselfe in, against all affronts, but to fortifie himself against Christ and his grace. No question of it, the appetite of the carnall heart which wants the creature: and the savor of the carnall heart which hath got it already, (though commonly it provokes a thirst after more) are the two common barres of the most people to keep out Christs sufficiency: and (in my judgement) the latter more then the former. For Silver answers all (saith *Solomon*) that is, a man of silver may have any thing, becaus its the price of all things: how hard then is it, to see an insufficiency in a thing, which is the price of every thing. Mony and wealth can build Churches, pulpits, buy all ornaments of a Church, Bibles and Tables and Chalices, and hire Preachers, and maintaine the Gospel: now, why then should it not buy Christ too? especially if alms, good deeds and workes of charity, accompany a profession of Christ and his religion; and a verball depending upon him and his merits alone, (not any Popish works or Idolls) for salvation: Alas! such profession of word and holding Christ in judgement, may easily stand with living upon the creature, and building the soules nest of joy, content and sufficiency in the holes of this rocke.

Rev. 3. 18.

1 Tim. 6. 18.

Rom. 1.

Gen. & Josh. uit.

Prov. 18. 11.

Eccles. 7. 12.

What an enemy it is to Christ.

How hardly then should such a rich man or such a selfe in the creature enter into heaven? It is easier for a Camell to goe through a needles eie. The Lord Jesus the truth it selfe spake it of a yong man, who thought himselfe past danger, who yet hearing of this sufficiency of Christ, if he would sell all, went away sorrowfull; and why? he had great possessions, that is, great possessions had him, and filled him top full with another

Matth. 19. 23.

ther ſufficiency, which made Chriſt unſavory: and the ſame I may ſay of theſe who were in the chaſe to get them: when the ſufficiency of Chriſt and all his dainties and fulneſſe (even a feaſt) was offered them, lo, their anſwer was, I am to goe ſee a farme, I have bought oxen, I am to marry a wife, have us excuſed, we have that which we like better, we cannot come. Farmes and oxen are joyned with wives, to ſhew that ſelfe in any creature and carnall content, ſets the heart at reſt, and gives it a common wealth within, ſo that it need not ſeeke out. So the third and laſt bad ground, which had both ſome roote and ſome depth within, yet without was ſo cumbred with theſe thorns of mony and pleaſures, living, preferment, great dependances, favor and repute in the world, that (like a canker) they fretted out the marrow and vigor of Chriſt and faith, or neede of his ſufficiency. Firſt, the fulneſſe of the creature ſwells the ſoule up with a conceit that God loves it deerely, that hee will entertaine it ſo richly: thinking him to be as buſie in heaven to make it a manſion, as hee hath beene liberall in giving it one here: not dreaming that the body may be full when the ſoule is leane, and that riches are given for a ſnare of the owners, as *Micoll* to betray *David*. Secondly, it prides the ſoule, to thinke of her ſelfe according to the outward appearance and glee of wealth and welfare: and that the ſoule is in as good caſe to God as worldward: and though there bee infinite much in the world againſt it, yet ſuch is the bribing property of ſelfe in the creature, that it perverts ſound judgement, not ſuffering the ſoule to thinke a thought againſt her owne worth: conceiving that all ſhould think her, as ſhe doth her ſelfe, very good and in a ſafe condition: Not remembring that for all the creature, it may be blinde, miſerable aud naked! and go from a Paradiſe here, to an hell hereafter, as *Dives* did. Thirdly, it ſtiffens and hardens the heart againſt the words both of Law and Goſpel, the one including all (the richeſt) within wrath, and driving them to a loſſe within themſelves: the other offering the eie-ſalve, gold and robe of the Lord Jeſus to ſupply that loſſe. How ſhall that ſoul hearken to either which feeles no neede when the eare and heart is ſo bedulled and ingroſſed with fulneſſe and fatneſſe of the creature, that none of the Redeemers ſufficiency can enter? Now if it ſtumble at theſe two in the porch, how ſhould it ever enter into the ſecret, the holy of holies, in faith and regeneration?

This may be enough for the purpoſe of this diſcourſe, to open the truth; ſave that this one reaſon may be added, That ſelfe in welfare and wealth, hath in it the ſpirit of ſcorning the Miniſtery of Chriſt: it bewrayed it ſelfe even when Chriſt himſelf preached: for it is ſaid, That ſome who heard him ſcorned him, for they were rich; and the like humor poſſeſſes their ſucceſſors. And this property agrees well with them who make the creature their ſtrong hold: as I have heard of a City beſieged, which caſt out loaves and victualls to the enemy in ſcorne, and telling them, that they were farre from ſtarving. As he ſaid, ſoule take thine eaſe, thou haſt laid up for many yeares: Even for ſo many, that the need of Chriſt will hardly be felt. Therefore to conclude this branch alſo, let mee admoniſh theſe perſons, that if ever the Lord will ſettle the alſufficiency of Chriſt upon them, he will firſt captivate this ſelfe in the creature and ſubordaine

Luke 14.

Matth. 13.

How the creature foreſtalls Chriſt.

1. It ſwells the ſoule with imagination that God loveth it.

2. Prides it ſelfe in the eaſe and welfare which it feeles.

3. Stiffens the heart againſt the word preached.

With diſdaine.

Luke 5.

Admonitions to this ſort.

2 Kings

Pſal. 73.

ordaine it to himſelfe: he will cauſe the image of it to be deſpiſed; yea, cauſe the ſoule to cry out of her ſelfe and ſay, what a foole, yea a beaſt am I in thy ſight! the ſoule I ſay ſhall bee full of the creature, even in a contrary ſenſe, that is, ſtomacke ſicke of it as a ſurfet: The Lord ſhall rectifie the ſoules judgement about this ſelfe: then the rankneſſe of this pleurifie to be let out of the ſoule. First, by ſhewing it the vanity and inſufficiency of it to helpe in the day of wrath: how poore a fort it will prove in the day of affliction and feare: It cannot rid the owner of an ague, of the tooth ache, of the leaſt affront; it hath no bloud in it to ſatisfie. Secondly, the Lord ſhall ſet the ſoule in a ſerious poſture and meditation of that preſence of his, which ſhall make all the earth and the glory of it to vaniſh and melt, and thoſe who have beene formoſt in this creature-happineſſe, to come hindmoſt & ſtand a far off, from them who have choſen Chriſt to be their ſufficiency: then ſhall the glory of the one bee turned to confuſion; and the diſdaine of the other to admiration. Then ſhall all their worldly proppes become as broken ſtaves, the ſplinters of which ſhall pierce them (much more then ever the care to get them could pierce them) with ſorrow, yea deſpaire: The Lord will cauſe them to looke into the creature, and to behold it, as branded with a curſe by ſinne: but doubly curſed, when in ſtead of ſerving Chriſt, it reſiſts him and fights againſt him, and makes Chriſt and the ſoule ſervants to it: which is to renounce him who is bleſſed for ever, for that which is curſed for ever, not onely through the want of Chriſt, but through her enmity to Chriſt.

1. See the vanity of the creature.

2. Behold the image and face of God in the promiſe.

3. Behold the curſe ſtamped upon the creature

Fourthly, They ſhall ſee the ugly ſhape of that creature which they have made an Idoll, and committed ſpirituall Sodomy with it, as degenerate a villany, as to commit filthineſſe with a beaſt. They ſhall ſee what a dampe it brings the ſoule into, when it places her happineſſe in the earth, and the hidden treaſures of it, how it makes the word and ordinances moſt fulſome and unſavory: 5. That all ſweetneſſe which any creature can afford, muſt come from Chriſt, dropping fatneſſe into it by his footprints in it: what ſavor then can it afford, when it oppoſes Chriſts ſufficiency by her own vanity, and ſo robs him of his? what ſavor can the ſoul ſuck from a creature which is a dead carrion? what is all the comfort of a creature to a dead ſoule; not only deſtitute of the life of Chriſt, but ſtabbing Chriſt to the heart, & rejecting his life? yea 8. It will worke the ſoul to a revenge of it ſelfe; chuſing to cut off the creature from it ſelf, then, it would not be cut off from it. By theſe & the like convincements the Lord will caſt down the fort of ſelf in the creature; ſtripping it naked of all her falſe ſufficiency: ſhewing her ſhe is but a gull not able to afford that which ſhe crakes of, that ſhee hath nothing but bare walles to boaſt of: that ſo, this ſtrong hold being razed and made levell with the earth, poverty of ſpirit may enter into the ſoul; and Chriſt and his ſufficiency (which onely belongs to them who are brought to nought in themſelves) may come into it. Therefore let all ſuch as have felt this diſeaſe in themſelves, ceaſe to marvell why their hearts have beene ſo empty of Chriſt, and beene left to ſuch a wofull ſtaggering of heart in point of comfort: For they have forſaken the fountaine, and digged broken pits to themſelves which will hold no water. Let them renounce them for hereafter

4. See the ugly hue of this ſin.

5. All the ſavor of a creature reſts upon mercy.

2 Cor. 10. 4.

Concluſion of the point.

after and ſay, *Aſhur* ſhall not ſave us, wee will not ride upon horſes; upon theſe vaine creatures: for with thee the fatherleſſe ſhall finde mercy; make them no prop of ſupport, either by greedy ſeeking, ſenſuall keeping or loathneſſe in forgoing: And Lord I finde my ſelfe as deſtitute and forlorne a wretch in point of grace, notwithſtanding all my deep portion in the creature, as if I were the verieſt begger in the Country: I ſee all true ſufficiency to be in thee, and that thine exceedes mine, both for kinde, roote, quality and degree of content, as much as a carnall, a fading, blaſted and vaniſhing, yea a vexing one, is inferior to a ſpirituall, immortall, incorruptible and ſatisfying ſweetneſſe: wherefore I count my ſelfe the ſame man whether I want or have, abhorring my ſelfe in duſt and aſhes: I renounce mine own, and reſt at thy diſpoſe for the creature, to have more or leſſe of it, and cleave to thine. And ſo much alſo ſhall ſerve for this fourth branch. 2Kings

Jer. 2. 13. Hoſ. 13. 2.

The laſt kinde of groſſe ſelfe, is Selfe-religion, or Religious ſelfe. And this is the invention of Satan (Chriſts deadly foe) that whereas all will not be prophane, nor naturaliſts, nor epicures, but will be religious: lo, he hath a baite for every fiſh, and can inſinuate himſelfe aſwell into Religion it ſelfe, as into luſts and pleaſures: and ſo provide, that in all the duties and priviledges which profeſſors of Chriſt boaſt of, yet there ſhall bee a cord upon their heele which ſhall pull them backe from all power and ſavor of Chriſt, aſwell as if they had never been towards any Chriſt at all. And ſo the nearer Chriſt they ſeeme to goe, the more dangerous ſhall their ſelfe-deluſion prove, and the more confident their ſufficiency of devotion makes them, the more wofull ſhall their defeat at laſt bee: and all for want of ſoundneſſe and ſincerity. And in this point I would inſiſt in three things: Priviledges, Duties, and degrees of Religion: All theſe ſtrengthen Selfe-religion in hypocrites and time-ſervers, and ſhroud them under a falſe covert and protection of that which is farre from them: for the firſt it was alway, is and will be, the boaſt of Jewes, Papiſts and common Proteſtants: They were the children of the free, not the bond-woman, *Abrahams* ſeed, ſuch as whoſe all the promiſes were, to whom the Ordinances and Oracles of God belonged: others were dogs and ſwine and accurſed to them: they cried, the Temple, the Temple: they were (of all other nations) the choſen generation, the peculiar people, all others rejected ſave themſelves; The Lord muſt want worſhippers, if he caſt them off: and by this meanes they were ſo puffed up in themſelves, that when Chriſt came in perſon to offer himſelfe for ſalvation, they abhorred and ſlew him, and caſt him out of the vineyard: that fulneſſe and ſufficiency they felt in their priviledges, cauſed them to live in a practice of horrible treachery and impiety againſt God, and deſperate contempt of the Lord Jeſus, as it were under a banner of defiance. Juſt the like is the practice of Papiſts: who under colour of the Church, the Church, the ſucceſſion of Biſhops, the ancientneſſe of their Religion, the glory of their outſide of worſhip, pompe and bravery of rites and ceremonies, their proſperity and worldly happineſſe, their large and generall extent in government, their ſuperſtitious devotions; and what not? which fleſh can deſire, make themſelves beleeve, that they are the onely Chriſtians, and all other are upſtarts and coun-

The fifth Branch Selfe-religion.

What it is.

The branches of Religious ſelfe three.

1. Priviledges.

Matth. 3. 9.

Priviledges of Religion great enmity to many in keeping them from Chriſt.

2 Kings

counterfeits. So doe our common Proteſtants and hypocrites; they boaſt of their baptiſme, their part in the communion of Saints, their right to their word and ordinances, they are no hangbyes, no Gibeonites, no recuſants, no prophane ones, no moralliſts, nor epicures, but conſtant worſhippers of God, frequenters of the ſacraments, and partakers of all the priviledges of the Church. And this puffes them up, the divell blinding them, that they ſhould bee bewitcht with his charme and looke no further then a bare priviledge: comparing themſelves with ſuch as ſtill walke in a looſe and prophane courſe, and in reſpect of ſuch, deeming themſelves very religious. But what is the effect hereof? ſurely this, that under pretence of their great priviledges, they are full of themſelves, ſo that the pith and marrow of them, (for all tend unto, and end in Chriſt, or elſe are empty ſhells) faith I mean, and Chriſt in his ſufficiency to forgive, ſave and ſanctifie them, is a meere ſtranger unto them. The Church was pureſt, when her priviledges were feweſt.

When Conſtantine reſtored the Church to her priviledges, ſhe begin to degenerate.

The like may be ſaid of duties: It was the great boaſt of that Phariſee (and of all his tribe) that he faſted twice a week, gave almes, paid tithes of all, even to mint and cummin: he was not as the publican, no extortioner, no briber, no uſurer; and this made him crow upon his dunghill exceedingly, and ſwell in his law righteouſneſſe, that Chriſt never came in his minde. Thoſe Phariſees in the Goſpel upon whom ſo many woes are pronounced, how full of their duties were they? Chriſt himſelfe was a libertine to them and their ſtrictneſſe; a companion of Publicans and ſinners, a glutton and winebibber, in compariſon of their abſtinence and ſobriety; he could not keepe a Sabbath ſtrictly enough for them, nor walke cloſely enough to pleaſe them. And *Paul* who had beene one of them, and, after his converſion, bewrayed their ſecrets, confeſſed that as he truſted to his priviledges of a Jew, of circumciſion, of his ſect; ſo eſpecially that hee walked to the uttermoſt in the moſt preciſe ſtrictneſſe of his profeſſion, making conſcience of being a Phariſee; and throughout all his Epiſtles what doth he cry out of ſo much as his and their law righteouſneſſe, that is that exact and ſtrict walking in all the duties of the morall law and ceremonies: Oh! how this conceit of their owne vertues and moralities ſtiffened, ſwelled and puffed up all this baſtardly brood, not onely to diſdaine prophane ones, but alſo to abhorre the ſpiritualneſſe of the Lord Jeſus, and to contemne the offer of his grace as baſe and ſuperfluous? And what was the chiefe object of our Saviours outcries, woes and curſes, ſave this rabble of Phariſees? (one whole Chapter being ſpent therein) yea his bitter and irreconciliable antipathy and enmity of ſpirit againſt them above all other either heathens or prophane ones: Surely becauſe he ſaw that above all other oppoſition to himſelf, this was the moſt deadly and damnable, to ſet up a god againſt a Chriſt, an Altar againſt an Altar, a righteouſneſſe comming from a meere ſelfeloving and ſelfe ſeeking principle, from a carnall bottome, to a carnall end, againſt the eternall, ſpirituall, pure righteouſneſſe of the Lord Jeſus; who came to diſcover not onely all groſſe unrighteouſneſſe and make it odious, but alſo all righteouſneſſe of fleſh and all the obedience of hypocrites, and to caſt it as unſavory ſalt, dung and dogſmeate upon the dunghill: And to be briefe, what elſe is the religion of our daies and times both

2. Religious duties.

Luke 18.11. 12.

How dangerous.

Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9.

Matth. 23.

both among Popiſh and carnall Proteſtant worſhippers, ſave their duties, devotions? The one boaſting of his maſſes, ſacrifices, almes, penances, empty faſtings, building of Hoſpitalls, doing of good workes, and all to eſtabliſh their owne Corban and Kingdome; through the merit of their owne congruities and condignities; the other, their ſerving of God, hearing his word, receiving his ſacraments, abſtaining from the ſinnes of uſury, drunkenneſſe, uncleanneſſe, and doing the duties of the Sabbath, of mercy and charity, of righteouſneſſe and equity: But to be ſure, both of them ſwelling in the opinion of themſelves; both abhorring to feele any pinching need of the Lord Jeſus and his ſufficiency, to pardon both their unrightouſneſſe and alſo their counterfeit righteouſneſſe, being both equally damnable.

The 3. Branch Degrees of Religion.

But the third branch, *viz.* Religion in point of degrees and meaſures, is of all the moſt dangerous peece of Selfe, and ſwelleth the unſound and hollow heart of man in the opinion of himſelfe: Some boaſting of their knowledge of Gods will in generall: others of ſome degrees of legall humiliation: a third ſort of a wonderfull ſweetnes they have taſted in hearing the Goſpel, and the glad tidings of life & ſalvation thereby; a fourth ſhewing how they are awed by the knowledge of the word from their former courſes; what degrees of grace have been wrought in them, how long they have been hearers, and held out in their profeſſion longer then many revolters, what zeal they have ſhewed in ſetting up the Miniſtery in their Townes, praier in their families, care and conſcience, and good example in their lives; how many ſins they have laid aſide, what good they have done in their repeating of Sermons, calling upon their kindred and neighbours, what ſervices they have done for the Church, runne, ridden, written, beſtowed paines and travell to ſettle order and government in their places, how they have honored, graced and maintained the Miniſter, invited, entertained him to their houſes, how they have ſtood out and ſuffered for the Goſpel. Others go further & inſtance in the power of the promiſe of Chriſt in their ſoules: what raviſhing paſſions of joy, admiration and thankes that ſweet doctrine hath wrought in them, what pangs of deepe love and affection it hath raiſed in them, how it hath bred in them abundant weeping and ſorrow for their ſinnes, humiliation and feare under the hand of God, how they have ſtood upon thornes, till the Sabbath or lecture day came, what ardent deſires after the word, what longings, what frequent uſe of meanes it hath wrought in them, and how they have denied both luſt and liberties for Chriſt, and could be content (for the time) to beg, to goe to priſon and ſuffer for him; Beſides many effects which this hath wrought in them, the curbing in of their tongues, their paſſions, and their lives which were wont to be full of lying, deceit, rage, revenge, unmercifulneſſe, unrighteouſneſſe; but now they are become true of their word, quiet, moderate, curteous, gentle and mercifull: All theſe thinges laid together, cauſe them to thinke no leſſe then that their ſtate is good and ſound to God-ward; for why? the hearſay of Chriſt wrought all theſe things in them; And yet (not to condemne any particular perſon for theſe, ſeeing God only knowes the hearts of the ſonnes of men) how many have we knowne by wofull experience who have attained ſome of theſe or all theſe degrees, who yet in a ſhort time have bewraied themſelves

What degrees of Religion a man may attaine unto.

And to how ſmall purpoſe.

2 Kings

ſelves to bee time-ſervers, and wanzed away to nothing, as faſt as ever they ſeemed to come forward?

Alas! they never called themſelves to queſtion, never tried their eſtate by the rules of the word, nor came to put difference betweene a conſcience proceeding from ſupernaturall revealing, and betweene divine and ſpirituall perſwaſion: The Apoſtle hath a ſtrange ſpeech, 1 *Cor.* 15.19. If our hope were in this life onely in Chriſt, wee were of all men moſt miſerable: whereby we ſee, that many ſeeke their Chriſt onely for this life: that is, how they may make uſe of Chriſt here below, for a while to get themſelves ſome inward truce with an accuſing conſcience, or to get themſelves credit, eaſe and welfare here among men, with whom they ſee Chriſt and Religion are in requeſt: But as for a Chriſt to ſave, to ſanctifie and glorifie them for ever, they never hoped or beleeved in him for that. And why? Firſt, they never came to ſee themſelves wholly loſt and forlorne in themſelves, but ſtill held ſome prop of their owne to ſupport them, though Chriſt ſhould faile them, and ſo never feeling need of him, could never ſavingly and cordially make to him and apply him. Secondly, they never looked at a promiſe for it ſelfe, but from ſome pangs and flaſhes of ſelfe, liking the newes of Chriſt, for the good it preſented, taking the word to themſelves, rather in a dreame and a fancy after a thing they would have, then for the naked truth of the promiſer. Thirdly, or elſe they were led by outward ſenſe, the credit, gifts and plauſibleneſſe of the Preacher, in whoſe light they rejoiced, while it laſted, but if the miniſter were once removed, (then as a five out of the water, ſo) they loſt all their zeale againe: It bred with him and died with him. Fourthly, they heard without diſcerning of truthes, taking all alike, not cleaving to the doctrine as ſuch, able to ground and to ſettle them in peace through Chriſt: but as good thinges in generall, at randome, without putting difference, obſerving order or coherence. For, if another Miniſter came, who preached his owne vagrant and ungrounded fancies, they were as ready to heare him and be led away as by the former. Fiftly, they looked upon the zeale of others who ſnatch the Kingdome with violence, and thought it a diſgrace for them to bee more backward; and ſo hanging upon the common haunt and multitude, never examined what inward principle led them; and ſo, when zeale grew cold, and profeſſion more dead, they grew as cold and dead as others: Sixtly, or elſe having no roote in them, they clave to the word in peace and proſperity of the Church; but when they ſaw the times to frowne and trouble to come, then they ſaw they thruſt themſelves further in, then they had ſtrength to winde out, and ſo withered, and brought ſhame upon their profeſſion: Seventhly, or if they were grounded in knowledge, yet not in ſoundneſſe of heart, for ſo ſoone as the divell came to recover his poſſeſſion, hee found them empty, ſwept and garniſhed, that is, ſtill tainted with old luſts, world and pleaſures, though for a while they ſeemed to have forſaken them. Eightly, though they received the truth of Jeſus, yet not as the truth is in Jeſus; not to purge them, to change their baſe qualities, to transforme them from glory to glory: Ninthly, if they have proceeded to ſome ſhewes of holineſſe, yet they have not come under the authority of the commander,

1 Cor. 15. 19.

Wherein they come ſhort.

Matth. 11. 19.

Luke 11. 25.

Epheſ. 4. 21. 22.

mander, from the faithfulneſſe of the promiſer, who hath made his yoke eaſie and his burthen light : Their obedience is rather in the letter, and in the eaſier points of the Law, then the hard and craggy; they goe not up the hill with *Ionathan* upon all foure, but downe hill; They are like dead fiſhes which ſwimme downe the ſtreame, not living ones which ſwimme againſt it, in ſome few thinges, not all, with an equall exact carriage, in ſome acts, not in the bent of their ſpirit, and the ſtream of their life: As the ſprings are, ſo is their running to themſelves; if they be taxed for any evills, 10. Then they excuſe them by infirmities, and lick themſelves whole by the ſores of the godly; not remembring that the godly have ſundry defects in grace, but not one (as themſelves) maine want of grace; and theſe they pretend not as excuſes, but grone under as burthens; alſo they colour themſelves by this, that their ſinnes are few, and but ſmall, or elſe neceſſary, or but ſecret and not breaking out: whereas a ſound heart knowes, one ſinne may be as full if it runne into one channell, and may be as much delighted in and fed on, as many diſhes; alſo that Gods people never fall into ſuch a neceſſity as to ſinne; are free from ſuch ſtraits, as to ſtretch conſcience for eaſe, credit, wealth, and outward reſpects : and laſtly, *Lots* wife paid as deare for her contemplative ſinne as for her actuall : And (to end) they abide in their evills and recover not; whereas Gods people are as a blade of good mettall which beeing bent will returne, and are never well till with the needle of the diall they ſtand juſt toward the North of repentance. Twelfly and laſtly, if they goe forward to ſuffer for Chriſt, it is with much adoe, and ſtruggling againſt it; and in ſuch ſufferings as they can licke themſelves whole another way; or if they be driven by neceſſity of ſhame or light to it, yet rather out of compulſion, then purity and goodneſſe of their cauſe and conſcience. And ſo much bee ſpoken for the clearing of theſe three branches of Selfe-religion.

Matth. 11. 29. 1 Sam. 13.

I conclude this laſt branch with admonition alſo; that we abhorre this ſufficiency of ſelfe-religion and righteouſneſſe. Its the ſtilleſt ſtreame of all, yet the deepeſt gulfe, and under pretence of drawing neareſt to Chriſt his privy chamber, becomes the greateſt traitor to him. I condemne not morality, civility, religious duties and degrees : As the Towne-clarke *Acts* 20. ſaid to them of Epheſus, *Diana* is a great goddeſſe, who denies it? But we muſt make no uproare for her : So, theſe are good, but they muſt make no mutiny againſt Chriſt, and by a ſufficiency of their owne, deſtroy his : If they come under his banner to fight for him, they doe well : But to erect one of their owne againſt his, is deadly treaſon. Therefore as marriners in danger of life by ſhipwracke, looke not at the value of their wares, nor the uſe of them, ſilkes, velvets, corne, wine, tacklings of ſhips, but how they endanger their lives; ſo in Gods feare let us doe with ſelfe-religion, a commodity in ſhew farre above morality or carnall welfare, but if it equally (or more) endanger the ſhip and life of the ſoule, caſt it alſo with the reſt overboord : remember not, many of theſe five ſorts of groſſe ſelf, politiques, carnall, wizards, moraliſts, worldlings or Phariſees, get into heaven : Alas! they ſtick at the porch, not in the narrow gate : how then ſhould they enter? If ever God make ſuch capable of Chriſt, he will pare off their Camels bunch, and make them

This ſufficiency of ſelfe muſt be abhorred.

2 Kings

Phil. 3.

Esay 55. 2.

them of *Sauls*, *Pauls*: who saith of this aswell as of all the rest, I counted them all as losse, and as dogsmeat, that I might bee found in Christ, not cloathed with mine owne, but his righteousnesse. Be wise in time, lay not out their mony for no bread, nor your paines for that which satisfies not; empty their soules of it, that Christ and his good things, refined wines and fatnesse may satisfie you: Let others pray to God to pardon their vices; doe you beg mercy and pardon for their vertues, for their religion, duties and performances: If the heart be brought to renounce this sufficiency, its a signe there is a better comming in place: when all is done, say of thy selfe as *Luther* of those devotions, I count my selfe no nearer heaven by them, then if I had plaied the Publican all this while; nay in some regard further off: The Divell else will cut thy veines in this warme water and cause thee to perish insensibly. Consider that to have this selfe of thine, may seeme somewhat; But to cast all this off, and be naked and nothing, can onely prepare thee for that fulnesse and sufficiency of Christ which can onely save thee: Which grace the Lord grant thee: Thus for a more cleare handling of this argument, I have digressed from the streame of my doctrine; it is now high time to returne to it againe. So much for this time. Let us pray for a blessing, &c.

Ann Allum

Her Book

1732

THE

THE FIFTH LECTVRE
continued upon the eleventh Verſe.

VERSE XI.

But Naaman was wroth, and ſaid, Behold I thought thus in my ſelfe, ſurely he will come forth, and call upon the Lord his God, and ſtrike his hand upon the place, and recover the leper.

VERSE 12. *Are not Abana and Pharfar, rivers of Damaſcus, better, &c.*

HAving in the former Lecture (beloved) made way to ſettle this maine Doctrine of cloſe Selfe upon her bottome, by ſevering from it ſome kindes of ſelf more groſſe and palpable: I muſt now (taking it for granted that you remember what I have ſaid of it already) proceed to the handling of the point: And leſt any ſhould thinke there is no finer ſpunne ſelfe, then that I have ſpoken of: Firſt, I will mention ſome branches of this roote, mixing themſelves with the ſoule in her ſtrife after faith; and (as the Ivy about the bow) twining about the beſt endeavours of the poore ſoule, to hold it off from the promiſe. This being done, I will prove the doctrine by Scripture and reaſons: Thirdly, I will lay downe an anſwer to a queſtion, for the opening of the dangerous nature of this enemy. And laſtly, come to ſome uſe of the doctrine. Firſt of the firſt.

Returne to the maine ſcope of the point of mixt ſelfe.

First then, that you may perceive (brethren) what manner of thing this mixt ſelfe is, I will name ſome of the chiefe inſtances wherein this diſeaſe diſcovers her ſelfe. The which I mention without any curious order, and leave them to the godly wiſe to conſider of, every one to ſingle out his owne annoyance. The firſt is ſelfe error, imagining that the Lord in his promiſe and offer of Chriſt doth not ſo offer him as therewithall conveying power and efficacy of perſwadiug and inabling the ſoule to accept and beleeve it of it owne power, thereby creating in the ſoule the fruit of lips, but rather upon ſome condition of our owne ſtrength mixed with the Lords goodneſſe to concur (of our ſelves) with the promiſe. Secondly, ſelfe-conceit (ſuch as *Naamans* here was) fancying

Mixt ſelfe wherein it diſcovers it ſelfe.

1. Error.

Eſay 57. Jam. 1. 16.

2. Self-conceit.

2Kings

cying a way of our owne ſpeedier and quicker then we have warrant for, to wit, that if once the ſoule bee under a condition, and prepared for Chriſt, by ſorrow, deſire and diligence; the worke of beleeving is as preſent, as the grinding of the corne, when the upper milſtone runnes upon the nether: whereas faith is the ſtampe of the ſpirit, which bloweth when it liſteth, at his pleaſure. Thirdly, ſelfe-preparations, that is a taking up of a reſt in the ſoule, that if ſhe can but attaine to theſe, ſhe need goe no further, for theſe can be wrought in no other then in ſuch as ſhall be ſaved: whereas firſt the queſtion is, whether they be truly wrought, or from ſelfe-love; and although they proceed from the promiſe, yet happineſſe conſiſts not in them, but in the omnipotent power of God, carrying the ſoule by them into the ſtreame of the ſatisfaction of Chriſt, the onely blood whereof is ſufficient to ſave it by faith. Fourthly, ſelfe-bondage, which is, when the ſoule is ſo extreamly oppreſſed with the reliques or returnes of ſlaviſh feare, through corruption and guilt, too deeply apprehended; that it is dazeled and held under from beholding the free and cleare truth of the promiſe to ſet her at liberty; yea if melancholy and frowardneſſe of will be added hereto, mixed with the ill cuſtome, to conceive ſo deepe enmity in God againſt the ſinfull creature, that ſhe will hold her owne peeviſhly, againſt all the light of the word, or counſell and perſwaſion to the contrary, *viz.* that God the offended judge is the firſt mover in this frame of converſion, and hath cut off his plea willingly, and intended the way of reconciliation himſelfe. The fifth is ſelfe-love, when the ſoule ſo lookes at the promiſe, as an object of immediate good to herſelfe, and for her owne ends and welfare; not ſubordaining her owne ſalvation to the glory of God, and the declaration of the depth of his wiſdome, and the riches of his grace, that he may be admired in them that beleeve.

3. Self-preparins.

4. Selfe-bondage.

5. Selfe-love.

1 Theſ. 1.

The Sixt is ſelfe-ſloth, when the ſoule hath a wambling and fulſome aime at the promiſe, not indeed ſeriouſly and ſadly digeſting the ground of Gods ſo free offering the ineſtimable jewell of Chriſt to her, for pardon and peace (called in Scripture the ſtrength of God, Eſay 27.5.) I meane the full appeaſing of his juſtice, by the paiment of a price; nor yet with how faithfull an heart, full and free grace he offereth, but looſely forgetting that all is yea and amen in Chriſt, and looking at the promiſe, as at a thing naked and unfurniſhed, hath a ſtrong conſolation and refuge, Heb. 7. The Seventh is ſelfe-treachery and doubtfulneſſe, whereby the ſoule having the generall offer of God to all under the condition, yet becauſe ſhe is not named in the word, therefore doubts that in ſpeciall ſhe is not intended in the offer, and ſo growes to thinke that ſhe may ſeparate the things which God hath joyned, whereas ſhe ſhould reſt in this, That the Lord debarres no ſoule from grace which debarres not herſelfe, ſaying, Ho every one that thirſteth, come &c. and the particular is included in the generall; and if every poore ſoule ſhould thus goe betweene barke and tree, and cavill, who ſhould ever come to beleeve? Eightly, ſelfe-infidelity, which is a deadly dart of Satan piercing the heart, even when the fruit is comming to the birth; tempting thus, why art thou ſo bent to cleave to the word? How knoweſt thou whether it be Gods word or no? If it be, how canſt thou prove it? If not, whereupon doſt

6. Sloth.

Heb.6.penult.

7. Treachery.

Eſay 55.1.

8. Infidelity.

doſt thou build thy great confidence? And this dart often ſo prevailes, that all the former witneſſe of the ſpirit, touching the truth of God, by many evidences ſeemes to be loſt. Ninthly, ſelfe-cavilling, when the heart is ſet upon excepting againſt the promiſe, either from her owne unworthineſſe, or Gods long delaies (which provoke the heart to wearineſſe) or comparing of the forwardneſſe of others, with her backwardneſſe, or elſe that God meanes not as he ſpeakes, but the contrary, even to caſt her off with ſome marke of vengeance: ſometimes ruſhing upon the rock of election, as if all labour were loſt, becauſe ſhe is not predeſtinated to ſalvation, (as if we were to get to the higheſt ſtep of the ladder, before we have aſcended by the lower) ſometime deſcanting about the way of revealing, why it ſhould bee onely by the word and ſpirit, and not by ſenſible waies of expreſſion, by voice from heaven, or extraordinary convincements: and ſo in ſundry other reſpects. 10. Selfe-feare, that the work of faith will be ſo hard and tedious, that it will never be compaſſed, by ſo weake and fraile a creature as ſhe is, ſo ignorant, forgetfull, corrupt and eſtranged from God; the preſent ſenſe of theſe and other corruption, dazeling the ſpirit, and enfeebling the heart, ſo that it growes to a falling ſickeneſſe, and is at a loſſe upon each occaſion, each Sermon it heares ſeems to ſpeake diſmall thinges unto it, and it thinkes it were better wholly to give over hearing then heare: yea and in a ſtrong tech and pang, dare not, or will not continue to heare, for feare it ſhould bee worſe, and heape up wrath inſtead of mercy: ſo that all which is ſaid either in publique or private, ſeemes to leake out, *Heb.* 2. 1. and ſometime this feare commeth from unlikelyhood of ever forgoing all ſin, or holding out to the end.

2 Kings

9. Cavilling.

10. Feare.

Eleventhly, ſelfe-ſtaggering, when the ſoule is betweene the condition of the promiſe, and the performance: as for example, if ſhe be urged to beleeve, becauſe the condition is already wrought, then ſhe queſtions that, whether it were ever wrought, at leaſt aright, becauſe alas! her ſorrow is little, ſhe hath never been ſo deeply tozed by the law, nor ſo broken hearted & full of affections and diligence as others: on the other ſide, when ſhee feeles the condition comfortably preſent, then ſhe ſtaggers about the promiſe, ſaying, the condition is not the matter, but the beleefe it ſelf, and that is above her power, many come farre who never beleeve, and faith is the gift of God and free, and what if it ſhould never bee wrought, or ſhee ſhould die and be paſt hope, ere it be effected? Thus Satan comes between cup and lip, to defeate the ſoule of her due: whereas, if ſhe were ſtaied and ſettled upon the word, and (as 2 *Ioh.* 8.) would not loſe thoſe good things which ſhe hath gotten but hold a little, cloſely, till more come, the worke would not be alway to beginne; as the frame of a Carpenter when it is diſordered as faſt as hee laies it together. Twelftly, ſelfe-ſullenneſſe and unthankefulneſſe, (which is in a contrary extremity to eaſe) when the ſoule will not ſee or acknowledge what God hath done for her, nor abaſe her ſelfe, as meaner then the leaſt mercy of God, nor confeſſe that any ſtep toward converſion, is more then the Lord oweth her (having her at an infinite advantage by her guilt) and ſo chuſing to ſpend her time in ſullen complaints, for the meaſures ſhe wanteth, then gracious meltings and praiſes for any thing ſhe enjoyes:

11. Staggering.

12. Sullenneſſe.

2 Kings

whereas the Publican thought it mercy to tread on the earth, to looke up to heaven; and it is mercy that she is not in hell, but under hope and Gods ordinances and patience: This is the fruit of pride and doth set back the soul more from profiting, then if she could stoop to be at Gods dispose.

13. Ease. Thirteenthly, self-ease or dalliance when the soule through idlenesse hath lost her former diligence and earnestnesse and painfulnesse in using all meanes publique and private for the making of her calling and election sure; waxes slacker in her esteeme, and in her love and affections, as thinking her selfe now past danger: and so neglects the seasons & intimations of the spirit, plies not nor followeth the motions of the assisting and perfecting grace; but lets them wanze as if she could meet with them at her pleasure: but by this meanes Satan circumvents afterward and stings her for this confidence and presumption, becaus she is guilty of slighting such grace as she feels to be past her reach to recover, and therefore justly suffers for her looseneſſe and giddineſſe. 14. Selfe-dulneſſe and deadneſſe of spirit, in not marking and pondering, digesting and applying the truthes we heare, and so growing towards ripeneſſe *Heb.*5.10. which sinne makes us not only non-proficients in the doctrine of Christ, but also inferior to our selves, and farre short of that we might be; especially when this disease comes not from naturall disability and unavoidable weakeneſſe, but from affected error, as from an heart overmuch implodded in the earth, and made heavy by sensuality and carnall ease, *Luke* 21. 37.

14. Dulneſſe.

Luke 21.37.

15. Foolishneſſe. Againe Fifteenthly, selfe-folly, I may better call it selfe hatred, when we are not so wise or forward to dispute for the truth and honour of God and his promise, as we are to reason against it, and our owne soules, thereby making a worke, (not easie of it selfe) to be more wearisome and tedious then it need to be; whereas rather we should reason the matter seriously betweene God and our souls (as in *Ierem.* 2. vers. 9. the Lord bidds us to doe, and *Esay* 1.18.) and laying the desperateneſſe of our misery to the hope of his promise, wee should rather wonder that all place of pleading should not be taken from us, then cavill against a plaine naked word of God, pinned upon our sleeves. Those Ninivites when yet they had no cleare promise, yet reasoned thus, who can tell whether Gods fierce anger shall turne away or no? They thought it their wisdome rather to catch at a word a farre off, then to lie in present misery without hope. But self-folly still delights to shut out it selfe by her disputes against God; & cowardly to shun a possible mercy that it might lie down in remedileſſe sorrow. This (I say, must needs be horrible fool-hardineſſe, rather to perish, then venture upon a promise of ease and remedy. The last of all, is selfe subtilty or slineſſe; whereby the soule secretly withdrawing her selfe from the power of the promise (which ought to work all her works for her, both preparing and finishing) and finding her owne affections of hope, sorrow, joy, desire and the rest, very ready to put forth themselves in the work of disposing the soul towards Gods grace, and to mixe themselves with the word: doth welcome and applaud her owne selfe and all her abilities, and beginnes to compasse her selfe with her owne sparkles, with her owne feelings, and with the joyes which come from her owne welwishes to her selfe: which having no roote of Christ and his

Jer. 2.9. Esay 1.18.

Jons 3.8.

16. Slineſſe.

spirit

ſpirit in them, but of ſelfelove, muſt needs vaniſh and leave the ſoule as low as ever they found it, and ſo the longer and cloſer they are clave to, the greater confuſion they cauſe: till the ſoule being weary of her owne pride and mixtures, freely reſigne it ſelfe (as empty and nothing) to the meere good pleaſure, perſwaſion and leaſure of the ſpirit to act and effect all both preventings, aſſiſtings and perfectings, by his owne ſtrength; which is alway ſtrongeſt, when the ſoule lies loweſt, as the red earth of which *Adam* was formed, till the Lord breathed the ſpirit of life into it; And ſurely to conclude, there is nothing more eaſie then to be deluded in the triall hereof: for ſuch is the inchantment of ſelf in this kind, that no experience of diſappointing the ſoule, by her falſe feelings, will teach her to deny her ſelfe and humble her ſelf before God, except only ſhe apply her ſelfe cloſely to the rule of the word, in every ſteppe ſhe takes, examining from what bottome her affections and preparations proceed: and finding ſelf to be chiefe in the work, inſtantly to ſuſpect it and conſtantly to reſiſt it, beleeving that the moſt abiding and laſting worke of humiliation and preparation proceeds from the ſweetneſſe and freedome of a promiſe from a reconciled God, when the heart is moſt deſolate and helpleſſe in her ſelfe. By theſe few the reader may perceive what I meane by this privy-ſelfe: and by theſe heads hee may learne to judge of other like which are infinite.

Now then I proceed to prove the point, that this mixt ſelfe (when all is done) will deprive the ſoule of mercy; if it be not prevented. Let the firſt text be that *Heb.* 4. *ult.* We ſee they were diſappointed of the entring into his reſt: why? were not they faire for it? yes ſurely they had forſaken Egypt, and come a great journey in the wilderneſſe. But what letted them? Unbeleefe. And what cauſed that? Selfe. Not only their wiſhing to be in Egypt at their fleſhpots, nor yet their fornication and Idolatry: But (as *Eſay* tells us) they rebelled againſt his holy ſpirit: Their ſpirituall rebellings, cavillings, diſtruſt, were the cauſes: They erred in heart (as the Pſalmiſt calls it) that is, they entertained falſe conceits againſt him, ſometime they asked, Can God ſpread a table in the wilderneſſe; Sometime they pitied their children ſaying, Alas! We ſhall never ſee Canaan: Sometime they ſaid, the Giants were able to eat them up, there were chariots of iron: Sometimes they ſaid, this was not the way: God might as well have brought them the right way to Canaan, as the wrong, if he had meant them well. They made the promiſe of entring (eaſily and plaine in it ſelf) to be difficulter then it was: ſome ſaying, it is as high as heaven, how ſhall we get thither? can we climbe up? others thus, it is as deep as the nethermoſt earth, how ſhall we deſcend thither? is it poſſible for us, to conſtrue ſo hard a promiſe, whereof we ſee neither ſenſe or colour? to make a worke of forty daies, to be forty yeares, and yet meane us well? Therefore *Moſes* tells them, ſay not the word is far off, for it is neare thee, in thy mouth, yea thine heart, that thou mighteſt beleeve it. The deceit of the erring hearts warped theſe crotchets, to hold them out of Canaan, and to ſcatter their carcaſſes in the wilderneſſe. Another text is, *Heb.* 12. 15. Let no man faile of the grace of God. Let there be no bitter roote ſpringing up in you, to defile you, and turne you off. He had ſpoken before of *Eſau*, who was the firſt borne,

Proofes of the point.

Eſay 63. 10.

Pſal. 9. 2.

Numb. 9.

Deut. and Rom. 10.

Heb. 12. 15.

2 Kings

and ſought the bleſſing with teares, yet failed of it: he came too late, after it was conveied away from him too ſure, to *Iacob*: why? he had a bitter roote ſpringing up in him, a ſelfe-willed, peeviſh heart againſt his brother, he diſdained that he ſhould be preferred. The Apoſtle applies it to the Hebrewes, who were faire for the promiſe (read *Rom.* 10. 1,2,3,4,5, 6. &c.) but yet failed, and loſt it, the Gentiles were preferred. And why? there was this bitter roote of ſelfe in them, they ſtood upon their conceit, none were the Church ſave they, none ſo righteous as they; They ſcorned that dogs ſhould goe to heaven before thoſe whoſe righteouſneſſe was ſo preciſe as theirs: and this conceit defiled, hardned them, and overthrew the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt. They could never ſubmit ſelfe to the word preached, nor comply with it, but bitterly rejected it, and them who preacht it, as being a new way to heaven, and not that which they had learned: and ſhould they ſtoop to this new learning of Chriſt? This bitterneſſe overthrew them.

Rom. 10. 1, 2, 3. 4.

Eſay 8.

So *Ahaz Eſay* 8. was faire for the promiſe of victory: inſomuch as the Prophet bid him demand a ſigne: he would not: why? Selfe-preſumption letted him, he thought he was ſure enough of God, if once he ſpake the word: But the Lord looked at his owne honour, and therefore gave his people a ſigne, by a Virgin that ſhould conceive and bring forth a ſonne: So that the confidence of his fooliſh heart, which thought hee beleeved God, whereas in truth, he ſought himſelfe onely, and not the glory of God, deceived him. So it is ſaid, *Luke* 4. the Phariſees and Elders comming to *Iohns* baptiſme, deſpiſed the counſell of God, touching their ſalvation: why? becauſe they were carried with ſtrong ſelf-prejudice againſt the way of *Iohns* Miniſtery, and choſe rather not to bee ſaved at all then that way. The Galathians were faire for heaven alſo, and ran well: what letted them? a miſpriſion thruſt into their heads by falſe teachers, that *Pauls* way and Gods way agreed not, and that the old way by Ceremonies was beſt, eaſieſt and likelieſt, becauſe agreeing with fleſh; and this makes *Paul* to feare, leſt he had beſtowed his paines upon them in vaine. Our Saviour Chriſts Diſciples were faire for faith: what letted them? ſelfe-ſloth, dulneſſe of heart. Oh you dull and ſlow of heart to beleeve all which is written in the Law and Prophets concerning Chriſt! in what a depth of darkeneſſe did it hold them? Their eies were held ſo downe, that they could not diſcerne the Lord Jeſus, when hee ſtood and talked with them. I will but adde one or two more, That yong man in the Goſpell was not farre from the Kingdome: what ſtopped him? Surely he came full of himſelfe, and had kept the Law from his youth: this he had a ſtrong conceit of: but when hee was turned out of that confidence, and put into a new way of ſelfedeniall, and ſelling all, he went away ſorrowfull; not onely becauſe he was covetous, but becauſe foreſtalled in opinion that his way was beſt, and is now croſſed. To conclude, that is a ſolemne text which our Saviour urges *Ioh.* 5. How can ye beleeve, when ye ſeeke or receive honour one of another, and ſeeke not the honour of God onely? Secret ſelfe will ſo ſerve God, that ſhee will foiſt in her owne ends, credit, praiſe and reſpect, even while ſhee ſeemes to ſeeke Gods: and ſo while ſhee ſhould ſave her owne ſtake, ſhee loſeth Gods: ſhee aimes not at him and the glory

Luke 4.

Gal. 3.

Luke 24.

Joh. 5.

of

of his grace onely, and therefore not at all. So much for proofes.

Reaſons of this doctrine are many, and may bee drawne from many heads: as firſt from the nature of this corrupt ſelfe. Secondly, from other mens courſes. 3. The practice of Satan. Fourthly, the juſtice of God. For the firſt, we may conſider the danger of mixt ſelfe from her owne corrupt quality, both in reſpect of the firſt familiarity of it, Secondly, the generalneſſe of it, Thirdly, the violence of it, and Fourthly, the tenaciouſneſſe or continuance of it. Touching the firſt boſome; beloved, and inward corruptions doe moſt bleare the eie of diſcerning, and pervert judgement, becauſe they goe in a ſtreame leaſt ſuſpected. A traitor who inſinuates himſelfe into a man ſo deeply, as to comply and correſpond with him in all his courſes, will deceive moſt dangerouſly. So ſelf runnes in the ſtreame of nature, and pleaſes it in every thing, it is as a bribe in the hand prevailing whereſoever it goeth. As that naturall agreement and well pleaſingneſſe of *Delila* to the humor of *Sampſon*, foreſtalled all which was ſpoken againſt her, ſo that he laid it not to heart, but went forward: ſo ſelfe hath a bewitching nature, and will ſuffer no objection to prevaile. For why? All ſeemes to be as it ſhould be: the fleſh is ſo tickled and inchanted with ſelfe-eaſe, ſelfe-conceit, ſelfe-duties and the like, they do ſo delude the heart with an opinion, that all is as it ſhould bee, that it detaines it in error habitually; yea it can ſo incorporate it ſelfe into all the beſt religious duties, that ſhee will very hardly be diſtinguiſhed: one would thinke the annointed of the Lord were before him; that of the Apoſtle expreſſes it well: it doth eaſily beſet us: as a man whoſe loines are compaſſed about with a cloſe girdle, is as he would be: If any doubt or ſcruple ariſe in the minde about a mans eſtate, by and by ſelfe rocking the cradle ſtills the whimpering child, and all is quiet, and as it ſhould be: Its like a bad Courtier which watcheth (as a cat the mouſe) that none whiſper one wry word in the Princes eare; or if he doe, yet he is cloſe at the elbow and ſuffers nothing to enter. Secondly, the Generalneſſe: Selfe is not as particular luſts, as adultry, lying, murder, covetouſneſſe or the like: but ſelfe is all corruption in one, the very ſpirit and roote of bitterneſſe, which giveth joice and nouriſhment to all branches; Its the Idoll of all ſpeciall luſts, to which all do homage and ſervice; its the body of all thoſe members, (I may rather call it the ſoule of all) in which they live: All their ſprings are in ſelfe: now then if this be ſo generall and ſo overſpreading an evill, what wonder if the deceit thereof bee as generall and dangerous? what may not the Prince doe, and yet no man open his tongue againſt him? what may not a Pope doe, though he draw innumerable ſouls with him into perdition, who may ſay, what doſt thou? Such a Lord and Pope is Selfe, and more univerſall.

Thirdly, the violence of it: Selfe is neer it ſelfe alway, and defires ſuch objects as are profitable; but much more when the object promiſes a great contentment and advantage: faith and grace and holy duties are ſubjects promiſing great reward, even immortality, when therefore theſe are propounded to the ſoule (though upon farre other tearmes, yet) how forward and eager is corrupt ſelfe to act her part? and how doth ſhe boaſt, that ſhe can put forth her ſelfe in ſo high matters? what is ſo

Reaſon 1. From the nature of this ſelfe.

In 4 things. 1. Familiarity or cloſenеſſe.

Prov. 17. 8.

Heb. 12. 1.

2. The generalneſſe.

Heb. 12. 15.

3. The violence.

Rom. 1.

2 Kings

selfe putting forth, as an handmaid affecting the place of her mistresse? who can beare her insolency? what is so negotious and eagerly busie, as an usurping *Absalon* acting the part of an unlawfull Prince over subjects? Such is selfe: never so stirring and like her selfe, as in Gods matters, which promise the greatest gaine and good to selfe; and what wonder then, if so stirring and violent a thing, doe deceive a man, and hold him in an opinion of welfare? *Iehu* in his heat of selfe-zeale, being warme in his geare: *Ananias* and *Saphira* being in the heat of their great charity, had no leasure to discerne that subtilty and self-ends (which prevailed over their outward performances) the one of murthering *Ahabs* posterity for a Crown (for so it was) the other the robbing of the Church, for the saving of some mony. Fourthly and lastly, the Tenaciousnesse of selfe: I meane when she is put hard to it, rather then she will shrinke in her horns and lose all her labour, she will hold close to her own tacklings and devour a great deale of difficulty. For a mans desire he will seperate himselfe (saith *Salomon*) that is deny himselfe and go farre, if need requires. It was easie for *Baasha* to kill *Ieroboam*, when it went in the streame of his owne ambition: But not easie for *Baals* Priests, when the case so required, to wound and launce themselves; or now for Papists to whip and mortifie their flesh, or for those in *Micha 6.* to offer the Lord the first fruit of their bodies, for the sin of their soules, rivers of oyle and wine: yet what will not selfe stand to, (within her possibility) rather then resigne up her right? *Sleidan* reports of a souldier cast out of the top of a castle (among others appointed to be so slaine) a marveilous height from the earth, who yet by miraculous providence, catching hold on the shrags of a mulbery tree, saved his life. Such a thing is this selfe: rather then perish, she will catch hold upon any thing, (be it never so above her in shew) not onely hard duties, but even sufferings, and herein seene to amate and equall even true selfedeniall, till shee be tried: What wonder then in such achievements, if she delude the soule dangerously, and maintaine a false principle to overthrow it? To forgoe a mans lusts so farre as that the uncleane spirit seems to be gone out of a man; to suffer persecution (as *Alexander* did with *Paul Eph.*20. a terrible example for such a timeserver, 2 *Tim.* 4.14.) to deny a mans credit, ease, health, honour, ends and life for profession sake, is a signe of some holding out; and yet selfe cannot hold out ever. Thus much for the first Reason, drawne from the nature of this wofull Selfe.

Prov. 30.23. 2 Sam. 15.2.

1 Kings 9. Acts 9.

4. Tenaciousnesse.

Prov. 18 1. 1 King. 15.27. 1 King. 18.28.

Mica 6.

Luke 11. Acts 20. 2 Tim. 4.14.

Reason 2. From comparison with others.

A second gound of this point, is from comparison with others: For how easie a conclusion is it to make, (especially selfe being the Logician) I see thus many adulterers, liers and swearers, despise God and all goodnesse, contemne the meanes and scorne the light, because their workes are evill: now I (for my part) am a diligent hearer of the word, a countenancer of Ministers, a worshipper of God in my family, and perhaps more, yea a renouncer of all open sins, and therefore must not I needs be led by a spirit of more excellent nature then they are? Surely if I had their spirit, I should be led to the same evills which yet now I abhorre. Nay more, when these hypocrites shall not onely compare themselves with others; but with themselves, and say, such a one was I wont to bee, a grosse cozener and oppressor, a cheater, a covetous wretch, uncleane and base,

Selfe upholds her selfe by false comparisons.

baſe, but ſince I have heard and profeſſed the Goſpel, I have abhorred ſuch ſtuffe, and am not onely in mine owne opinion, but in the judgement of others, another man: Oh (I ſay) what a ſhrewd argument is this, (for one that cannot or will not compare himſelf with the word, and trie himſelfe by the markes of a beleever) to give ſentence on his own ſide? which to doe, (for one not converted to God) how doth it overthrow all his former ſhewes, affections and duties? and hinder him from true converſion indeed. 2 Kings

A third reaſon may be from Satan: whoſe pillers are pitched more deeply and dangerouſly upon ſelfe, then upon any other more open offender: I ſay upon this privy-ſelfe eſpecially: Groſſe perſons doe but little hurt, no nor ſuch open hypocrites, as whoſe ſhews are openly confuted by their owne practice: for why? each one ſtoppes his noſe at them, and they themſelves comming once to the touchſtone of the word, have no great colour for themſelves, but more eaſily fall in peeces, and give up their weapons to the battery of the law and power of the word convincing them. But it is not ſo here. For when Satan can ſo delude an unſound heart by the ſweetneſſe of ſelfe, as to reſiſt the dint of the truth, and harden himſelfe in his pretended religion and duties, againſt the Lord Jeſus, and the ſpirit of faith and grace, hee ſleepes ſecurely in his den, knowing that ſuch an one is under locke and key, and is not like (by any probability) to get out of ſo excuſing and erroneous a conſcience and condition: for he is as ready to damne himſelfe for his owne ends, as for Satans, and therefore is under a more deepe chaine then any other ſinner is. True it is, Satan chuſeth rather (out of the exceſſe of his wickedneſſe to debauſh mens conſciences: but if once he can be reſolved by ſure markes, that ſelfe beares ſway above grace (which is no hard thing for him to doe, who can convey himſelfe ſo cunningly into the bent and frame of mens carriages) he knowes himſelfe as ſure of ſuch (abiding ſo) as of men of more prophane and odious converſation.

Reaſon 3. Satan imbarks himſelf more deepely in ſelfe, then in other luſts.

Laſtly, how juſt is it with God to give over ſuch to the hardneſſe of their owne hearts, to detaine the truth of God in unrighteouſneſſe, and to lurke ſtill in their owne den of eaſe and ſelfeconceit, who having cleerely conceived his will, and knowing that all who gather without Chriſt doe but ſcatter: and, except the Lord make the ſoule an habitation for his ſpirit, all our building is but in vaine, a meere Babell of confuſion, and a Caſtle in the aire: yet ſhall withdraw their heart from God in the maine worke of ſelfedeniall, and ſelling all, that they might buy the pearle. (I doubt not but there are many unſound ones, who know it not; but doubtleſſe the number of ſuch is few in compariſon of others.) To him that hath ſhall be given, but from him who hath not, ſhall bee taken away, that hee ſeemeth to have. And ſo much alſo may ſerve for Reaſon.

Reaſon 4. Selfe deludes dangerouſly by Gods juſt giving her over to her own way.

Matth. 25. 29.

I come now (according to my order) to anſwer a queſtion. Since this mixt ſelfe is ſo dangerous a miſchiefe, as to deprive the ſoul of all her labour and hopes; how might a man come to ſome diſcovery of ſelfe, that ſo he might the more eaſily be prepared to caſt it out, and prevent the danger of it betimes, ere it be remedileſſe? Seeing the conceiving hereof, may make much for the application of the doctrine following. I will

A Queſtion anſwered. How may a man diſcover this miſchiefe in his heart?

2 Kings

will a little insist in answering the question. Therefore I say, that the nature of this disease may partly appeare in the degrees of it, and partly in the footprints and passages of it: of both a little, and first of the first.

Answ.
1. By her degrees.

Selfe may be perceived by 3. properties.

These degrees may the better be conceived, if we consider, that privy selfe (as I have noted) is that chiefe fort and refuge which old *Adam* imbarkes himselfe in, for the avoiding of Christ and the promise: according then to the degrees of this bulwarke of flesh, and the danger thereof, the degrees of this selfe may be. I conceive then that we may refer all this secret mischiefe to these three degrees. The first in selfe presuming. The second in selfe fearing. The third in selfe withdrawing.

1. Presumption

Selfe presuming is that corruption which holds off Christ in the preparation of the Law & Gospel: such as these, feeling of the soul to be in an utter strait, and in an absolute need of Christ; mourning after him, desiring him, and taking paines for him, with the like. These all (if they be soundly wrought in the soule) proceeding not onely from legall abasement, but also Evangelicall tidings of peace by the good things which onely Christ hath purchased, cannot proceed from any principle in our selves. Howbeit selfelove is so prone to presume of that to bee wrought truly in us, which she covets and wishes to be wrought, out of a desire of her own welfare, that she easily mixes her selfe with the offer and promise, and (not staying her full time to weigh duly the nature thereof) takes her owne pangs and hopes and selfeloving conceits to be true preparations: Now whereas every abiding worke of grace must have a principle in it above selfe-ends and selfe-love, therefore, what marvell if such flashes of presumptuous selfe, vanish and leave the soule, as new to beginne as ever it was?

2. Self-fearing.

A second degree is selfe fearing, which may befall him who hath shot the former gulfe: for it lies in another extremity: and runnes as much on the left hand, as the other did on the right: thinking (though ungroundedly) that although some worke hath beene begunne in the soule, yet seeing many have gone farre and perished, faith is of few, and the free worke of the spirit, which bloweth onely upon some: also feeling fearfull untowardnesse in her selfe, darkenesse, dulnesse, deadnesse and unworthinesse, doubting also of her election or sanctification, that either she shall never renounce her lusts or persevere: upon these or the like feares, she concludes she belongs not to God, nor shall beleeve. Now this feare (a man would thinke) were rather selfdeniall then selfe: but in very deed, it is often discovered, to be a more tenacious enemy, then the former: for why? it trencheth horribly upon the simplcity of the offer, the power and truth of the promiser, as if it would set grace at a *non-plus*, and as if the Lord were a tyrant, a lyer, so doth it claspe to it selfe, will not be beaten out of her den, nor resigne up her selfe to God.

3. Withdrawing selfe.

The third and last degree, is yet most dangerous of all, I meane withdrawing selfe, and may be conceived to be the last corner of the strong fort of selfe in her opposing of Christ, and to prevaile with many, whom the former two could not foile. Marke it well. And it is that wofull and desperate flinging out of the soule, and incompliableneſſe of the spirit, with the onely and sound way of God to save the soule, which is faith, comforting, pacifying, converting and changing the heart to God. Which way, when the closeneſſe, solemneſſe, nakedneſſe and necessity of it, is pre-

preſented to the ſoule, it findes her marvellouſly wrapped and wound in, with abundance of ſuch ſecret ſcurfe of her owne: that firſt, ſhee begins to be offended at the purity, ſpiritualneſſe, and holineſſe of it, as farre exceeding her carnall comprehenſion or content, as the heavens exceed the earth: ſhee ſees not how it is poſſible for two ſuch extremities to bee reconciled. And ſecondly, ſhe feeles ſuch a Law within herſelfe, ſuch an horrible repugnancie of heart againſt this way, ſuch an old cuſtome of formality in Religion, eaſe, ſloath, reſtineſſe and luskiſhneſſe of ſpirit (as *Rahel* ſitting upon her Idols, and loath to ſtirre) that this way workes her to extreame unwillingneſſe to conſent and obey: ſhee wiſhes (from her heart) that the command of faith were of a ſhorter ſize, and a narrower extent: ſhe fore-caſts ſuch an utter miſery in ſelling her ſelfe and all, for the gaining of a promiſe, as the young man did, when he was bidden to ſell all; and therefore concludes, The price is too great, the commodity (as good as it is) is too deare, how ſhall it ſtand with ſelfe? What will old froth and vanity, liberty and looſeneſſe of heart, of thoughts and affections ſay to this geare? ſhe muſt (for ought ſhee ſees) conſult with them, and have their good wills, ere ever ſhe can conſent: here's the pudder, Selfe will not yeeld, her old bent, frame and ſtreame is carnall, or at leaſt but mixtly, and halfe religious; and therefore to caſt that out, would make her forlorne and a begger, an unſubſiſting creature without a bottome. On the other ſide, God will not yeeld, his bent and end is to ſubdue the ſoule to himſelfe, to bring her within his owne narrow compaſſe, to be all in all to her (as ſelfe was before) the meere and naked bottome of her joy & welfare: he hath given his Sonne to purchaſe the ſoul thus to himſelfe: He hath denied his glory and himſelfe, that hee might thereby win the ſoule to magnifie him in his love, and glory in his grace, and therefore he will not loſe his ends. Except then the controverſie bee determined, and the ſoule drawne up, and overcome, to reſigne up and raze this fort of Selfe, and truſt God with her owne ſoule for mercy, and for powerfull ſubduing of her ſelfe: This laſt degree will make her rather to chuſe the forfeit of heaven, then of her owne will and content. And this may ſerve for the three degrees of mixt or ſecret Selfe. Now I come to the ſecond part of the anſwer, touching the foot-ſteps and paſſages of this enemy, and ſo to end the queſtion.

Heb. 10. ult.

Concerning which I ſay, that the paſſages of ſelfe may bee conceived in theſe three particulars: Firſt, in the ground of it: ſecondly, in the carriage of it: thirdly, in the ſcope and iſſue of it. For the ground or principle of it, it is Fleſh: that which is not from Grace, is no better then fleſh, ſeeme it what it will; and that may appeare both in Legall ſelfe and Evangelicall. For Legall ſelfe, I may ſay that which the Holy Ghoſt, Eſay 58. ſpeakes of Hypocrites, that even in their faſting (which was ſelfe-afflicting, Levit. 23.) yet they had pleaſure: they kept their falſe meaſure within, and nouriſhed ſuch a carnall heart, as cauſed their humiliation to be defiled: ſo is it here. If we knew who were elect, and who not (as we cannot) we might as well diſcern them by a defect of Legall, as well as Evangelicall preparations: for Chriſt is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end of the ſalvation of his owne. So that (as common a worke as the Law is accounted) ſure it is, that ſelfe hath her bredth in that

Secondly by her paſſages. Three.

1. Ground of Selfe is fleſh.

Levit. 23. Eſay 58.

Revel. 1.

2Kings

that narrow, and admits not ſuch abaſement as the Law worketh in the elect, but rather ſhe hath pleaſure, and beares off the dint, by ſome extenuation of her ſin, or other, even then when ſhe ſhould receive the ſacrificing knife to cut the throat, that is, to ſlay the pride and jollity of nature: ſhe lickes her ſelfe whole (if ſhe can) as faſt as the Law wounds. But if it ſo fall out, that the Lord is purpoſed to breake in upon ſuch a ſoule with his terrours, and to caſt her downe to the ground, ſo that ſhee is under water, and terrified to purpoſe; yet herein ſelfe appeares, that either ſhe windes herſelfe out as ſoone as the extremity is over, by indirect meanes, or elſe the ſtrait ſhee is in, is no meanes to drive her out of her ſelfe to another, but rather to fret and rebell, thinking ſhe hath wrong: or ſhe growes thereby to thinke herſelfe to be in a better caſe, becauſe ſhe is ſtopped in her old courſe: or if the utmoſt extremitie comes ſhe chuſeth rather to rid her ſelfe from it by violence, and deſtroying of her ſelfe, rather then to ſee God in the worke. But not hereby to behold the clear way of God, to bring the ſoule to a condition of grace, when ſhe is at an utter loſſe and plunge in her ſelfe. For then this worke ſhould leave her better then it found her, that is, cauſe her (upon a ground of the Word) to ſee herſelfe within Gods net and ſo to grow to conceive ſome poſſibility and hope, which is too lively a worke for ſelfe to reach unto.

Both in reſpect of the Law and the Goſpel.
1. The Law.

Secondly, in reſpect of the Goſpel, ſelfe is but fleſh: The Goſpel preſents Chriſt to the beleeving ſoule, dearly and favorly; but ſelfe failes in both her eye-ſight and heart-ſight of him: I mean, both in underſtanding and will. For the firſt, ſelfe cannot ſee ſo much of Chriſt, as God offers in his Goſpel; ſhee beholds onely ſuch an excellencie of Chriſt offered therein, as is ſevered from the gift to receive him with, which (upon poynt) is as good as nothing: for it is but a ſhread of Chriſt, which an hypocrite may have, Rom. 2.5.6. But a poore ſoule ſees Chriſt even as the truth is in Jeſus, and as hee is offered to the ſoule; that is, not as a bare price of pardon and peace, but as a thing enabling the ſoule to buy, and receive him into her own boſome. Of him, ſaith *Paul*, are we, who is made unto us of God, &c. Marke, not as onely as cloath, which will make a garment, but as a garment fitted for us, and ready made: for that he ſerves for, both covering and defence. As the twy-light differs from the brightneſſe of the morning Sunne upon the top of an hill, whence a man may ſee all the wide ſky: ſo doth a beleeving ſoule and ſelfe differ in beholding Chriſt. That which is ſaid in another ſenſe, Matth. 24. That the Sonne of mans day ſhall bee as the light which ſhineth from Eaſt to Weſt: that may bee ſaid of Chriſt offered to the eye or minde of a beleever, that the whole light (for kinde) of the Sonne of righteouſneſſe, is diſcovered to him. As our Saviour tells his Diſciples, To you I ſpeake clearly, to others in Parables, that ſeeing they might not underſtand, becauſe they will not; ſelfe putting in a condition of her owne, which God puts not: For the Lord ſo offers Chriſt, that the vertue of the offer becomes to a broken ſoule both price and Chapman; yea, breeds that in the ſoule which it offers even faith to embrace it. But ſelfe puts in a condition, If I can accept it. Shee would in a ſort bee cloathed and fed upon her own purſe. Now this condition God puts into the offer, I will create the fruit of the lippes, I will take out the heart of ſtone, I will write

2. Goſpell: and that both in the eye-ſight,

Rom. 2.
Epheſ. 4. 21.

1 Cor. 1. 30.

Matth. 24.

Matth. 13. 11.

Eſay 57.
Jer. 31. 31.

my

my Lawes in their heart, and cauſe them to beleeve, &c. Selfe heares theſe things as the noiſe of many waters: I ſee (ſaith ſhee) an excellent thing offered to ſuch a one as can receive it; and then ſhee goes about to perform the condition her ſelf, hoping thereby to compaſſe Chriſt: But this labour might be ſpared, if ſhe beheld the offer aright, as able both to prepare the ſoule with brokenneſſe and emptineſſe, and alſo to beget faith in it. The honeſt ſoule puts faith into Chriſt crucified, and the offer, ſaying thus; If the Lord will ſave mee, I will let him alone alſo to worke faith in me, by the *Merit* and worth of the thing offered; for why? God doth not offer me a dead Chriſt, but a quickning Spirit, not as a bare object of excellencie, ſerving to enable me to concurre with him of my ſelfe, and to be a partner with him in the poynt of application; but as a purchaſe of ſatisfaction to juſtice, and alſo of faith for mee to embrace it with, that he who boaſteth might boaſt in the Lord. Oh! if ſelfe could know the gift of God, and who it is who offereth (one that can doe that for us which he did for that woman, Joh. 4. and that blinde man, Joh. 9. while he talked with them) what a light would it afford to the ſoule? The ignorance of this cauſes the ſoule to bee in as deep a ſtagger after Chriſt is revealed, as it was before: for why? Selfe is ready to cavill, Lo, God offers Chriſt as one ſhould offer an hundred pound to one for the running of a mile, whoſe legges are cut off. But a needing ſoule, ſet out of, and beyond her ſelfe, ſpins out all her hope and helpe from the promiſe, truſts not to her own ſteppes which ſhe makes to Chriſt, but to the ſteps which Chriſt makes toward her, both as her price and Advocate to apply it, 1 Joh. 7. 8. Joh. 8. 22. the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

1 Cor. 15.

1 Cor. 1. 30.

Secondly, Selfe failes alſo in the Heart-ſight of Chriſt. For although ſhe hath ſome glimpſe of affections toward the things of the Goſpel; yet ſhe favours them onely as things good to her ſelfe (ſo long at leaſt as that favour laſteth) and promiſe to her ſome welfare. A carnall heart muſt be pleaſed, and the Lord Jeſus muſt ſerve to that purpoſe. But a poore needing ſoule ſo ſees Chriſt offered, as by that ſight all other objects of ſenſe are eclipſed, yea diſpoſſeſſed; receiving thereby ſuch a bottome of ſpirituall reſt and content into the ſoule, as needs no other falſe bottome to eike it out withall. Selfe ſo apprehends Chriſt as an object of good, making up ſome formerly enjoyed good, not able to ſatisfie of it ſelfe: and ſo both holds her owne ſtill as eſſentiall, and addes another to it, as onely a bettering of another, not a caſting out of another, that Chriſt might be all in all; that he, I ſay, might be in ſtead of Selfe. A pearle to one that findes it, is both houſe and ground, ſheep, cattell, pullen and all, makes all baſe, & to come under the worth thereof: So doth Chriſt bear downe Selfe, and becomes to the ſoul that which all wealth, eaſe, ſports, company, pleaſure and content could bee. Selfe ſoders matters of all ſorts together, and makes an Image of all mettals mixed with clay, joines a horſes creſt and ſhoulders to the head of a man. Why is this? becauſe Chriſt is not revealed to the heart, as her *Adæquate* and full object; ſhee heares of him, as the Jewes dream'd of releaſe, an halfe object of happineſſe, not as an excelling good; in compariſon of which all former are dung and droſſe. Satan ſo blindes the eyes of Selfe, that this glorious ſight never comes at the heart, to poſſeſſe and fulfill it.

And the heart ſight of Chriſt

2 Cor. 4. 4.

I ſay

I ſay, Selfe ſhuffles and huddles all together, and reacheth at the Lord Jeſus, with that carnall ſavour, wherewith ſhee reacheth at profits and pleaſures: (as a fulſome fellow, who complements with all ſorts alike) ſo he be ſatisfied with any thing, he is glad. As for diſcerning of things that differ, and aſcribing the maine eſteeme of heart, to that which beſt deſerves it, out of judgement and ſavour what is beſt, hee is farre from it, onely the honeſt heart ſees a peculiarity of ſavour, gaine and ſweetneſſe in Chriſt: and (as once the Oracle bid them that asked who ſhould have the Kingdome, Give it the beſt) ſo ſhee gives up her ſelfe, with all her content and delight, even her Kingdome and prerogative, to the beſt, the true and undoubted Lord, even Chriſt: ſhee ſeparates the pretious from the vile, as if a man ſhould diſtinguiſh his love to a ſervant (both for kinde and meaſure) from the love of a wife or childe. The oddes is, as the hony which *Ionathan* taſted upon the top of his rod, in compariſon of eating it to fulneſſe and ſtrength for the purſute of the enemy. When the Lord doth not reach out by pieces and parcels of Chriſt, but throwes him into the ſoule with his whole heart and treaſure (as one would caſt his deare wife purſe and all, that ſhe might know his bounty) and gives the ſoule more then ſhe can aske or thinke (as *Salomon* to the Queen of Sheba, more then all ſhe deſired) then the ſoule hath an heart-ſight and view of him. Then ſhe is ſatisfied fully with his image, as receiving from his fulneſſe, that is, his heart fully reconciled, and ſatisfied by his Sonne, that can deny them nothing: And ſhe beholds in this offer, as much above all goodneſſe which *Adam* enjoyed, as heaven is above an earthly Paradiſe. Briefly, Selfe foſters two contents at once, one from a Principle of her owne being carnall, the other from an accidentall & violent: ſo that in time, the carnall prevails againſt the violent, and the violent vaniſhes. Some hold out and make a ſhift to deceive themſelves longer then others: but, except they grow to ſee their errour, and to ſet up the object of their joy above the carnall, they vaniſh into miſery. And this for the ground of Selfe.

The ſecond generall: The carriage of Selfe is ſuteable to the root or ground.

The ſecond generall poynt is, the carriage of Selfe. And marke, ſelfe in her grounds muſt needs bee like her ſelfe in her carriage; I meane, in thoſe performances which come from her. Nothing can worke beyond her owne Spheare: of Selfe and Fleſh, no act ſave fleſhly, can proceed. She will not ſuffer her own chanell to lye dry. So that, what ever means ſhe uſeth, faſting, prayer, meditating, hearing, conferring, whatſoever paines ſhe takes for a broken deſirous heart; whatſoever duties or graces ſhe doth, or makes ſhew of, ſhe can riſe no higher then her Spring and Fountaine lies. Selfe keeps center within, and acts all, as ſuppoſing there is a congruity and directive or procuring cauſe of grace in her. Shee lookes to win the Spirit of grace by the ſpirit of Selfe, not to loſe her owne ſpirit by the Spirit of Grace. She is not ſenſible of any thing ſave what comes from her ſelfe, and thinkes very well of any thing which ſhe feeles to proceed thence. And ſo will any ſoule confeſſe, which the Lord hath freed from this bondage. That all his performances were nothing, ſave a willing and running of their owne, though (while he was in his element) all ſeemed pleaſant. There is a way which ſeemes pleaſant to a man while he is in it, though when he is once out, hee ſees it tended

to

to death. And as hee in *Iob* ſaith, There is a ſpirit in man (ſuch as it is) which will be doing, and will have one finger in every buſines: but it is the inſpiration of the Almighty which muſt give underſtanding. I deny not, but Selfe (according to her light) admits of many degrees; yet all in one kinde, but as one ſpake of Uſurers and Theeves, one was leſſe oppreſſing then the other, yet the beſt would bite: So I ſay here, bad is the beſt of Selfe, ſhe will be chiefe in all matters, nothing muſt paſſe, but through her fingers; all the Corne muſt be fetcht home in her Cart, and ſome peece (at leaſt) there muſt be of her, and all to keep her from ſelfe-deniall, and from a promiſe (which are her two terrible objects) within her owne precinct.

How that appeares: v.z. In foure particulars.

Which may appeare in theſe few paſſages: Firſt, in her inſtinct: Secondly, her endeavour: Thirdly, her buſie eagerneſſe: Fourthly, in her diſappointment. A word or two of each. For the firſt, her inſtinct and ſavour which ſhe is carried by, is not godly, or holy, but earthly and baſe. As we ſay, Nothing in Popery is carried beyond the ſavour of ambition, eaſe, and the belly: ſo in ſelfe-religion nothing ſmells of any other ſave her owne wiſedome and ends, as here we ſee in *Naaman*, nothing ſavour'd or reliſht with his noſtrils, or appetite, ſave to be his owne carver, and to appoint the Prophet a way of his owne. Aſſiſtance and aid comes not faſt enough from any other fountaine ſave her owne. As the Egyptian Midwives ſpake of the women of Iſrael, they were not as other women, but quicke of travell ere the Midwife came at them: ſo is it here, it is a wearieſome waiting for Selfe to wait in paine, till the Midwife of a promiſe come to them, they can diſpatch more eaſily then ſo. When *Paul* and the Pilot were with the Centurion, the Centurion favored not the words of *Paul*, but the Pilots. One crotchet of her owne, how her edge ſtands to ſuch a Text, Doctrine, Sermon, Promiſe, and what her thoughts are of it, is more to her, then what the inſtinct, ſcope and ſavour of the Spirit aimes at; ſhee weighes out to her ſelfe Gods treaſures, not according to the Ballances of the Sanctuary, and the weights thereof, but her owne (not halfe ſo bigge) and ſo ſhee is found but light. The reaſon is, ſhe is not altered in ſubject, that is, in her ſelfe, but in object onely. Now the object cannot alter the ſubject of it ſelfe, without the grace thereof concurre therewith. And therefore in all her acts ſhee conſults with her owne likings, ſavour and feelings, as the Muſitians eare with the tune or jarring of his ſtrings.

1. Her inſtinct.

Exod. 1.

Act. 27.

Secondly, her endeavour is ſuteable: ſhe loves (for the moſt part) ſuch performances as are more eaſie, pleaſing and welcome to the fleſh, balking thoſe which are more ſpirituall and ſelfe-deſtroying, preferres a devotion in generall, before a ſpeciall manner of it, and hearing or reading before meditation; ſingle prayer before ſecret or continuall, or occaſionall, or faſting, &c. And in this endevour of hers, ſhe hath no ſcruples, but thinkes they ſhall prevaile. If (ſaith ſhe) I doe ſo, and ſo, read, pray, deny my ſelfe in ſuch a liberty, or doe ſuch a duty, I ſhall prevaile; not adding this, if I doe it in or by the warrant of ſuch a word or promiſe, carrying the ſtrength of God therewith, and look at my own endeavour as the ſervant of grace onely, without any ſtrength of mine owne, I ſhall

2 Her endeavour.

 proſper.

2 Kings

prosper. And hereunto adde this, That she rests in her endeavour, never harkening what God will answer, and whether he speake peace or no; but reckoning her worke for a price. This delusion is an inseparable evill from selfe. As the Preachers zeale, gifts, perswasions, are as her own performances, and as her morall weighings of matters have beene, so must grace needs follow: God must be tied to a necessity of blessing all which comes from selfe, whether she set God as chiefe above them, or her selfe above him, all is one: she examines nothing by the rule of right going to worke, but rests in the deed done; yea, let what objections will, come in their way, they are at a point, and returne to their owne bent, thinking that the children of such prayers and duties cannot perish: As those Jewes told Christ, of the Master of the Synagogue, he deserved he should heale his daughter for his good workes sake. But if selfe were as she ought, she should come in as that man did and tread himselfe in the dirt, Master I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roofe: so that in themselves they can feele somewhat to trust too, (though it be nothing) but in the Lords promise (bee it never so evident) they feele nothing.

3. Her Violence.

Thirdly, the motion of Selfe is eager and violent; she wants that inward moover of the spirit, which should act her by the power of a sweet principle from within, and put boote in beame (as we say) securing her of a good and safe issue of her labour. For then she would not put forth her selfe so earnestly and violently by her owne strength, but calmely and quietly rest her selfe well satisfied in the comfort of that spirit which can effect her desire, and subject her owne endeavours and performances to the spirit of grace. As the Prophet *Esay* telleth those Jewes who strove to overcome their enemies by the aide of forraine confederates, your strength is to sit still; follow not your own violent motion, but trust to the Lord, and let your streame runne in his, runne softly as the waters of Siloe: so I say to this violent selfe; stand still, behold the salvation of God, and you shall see your enemies all scattered, not by your strength or might, but by the power of God. We know what strife a man useth in his trade, who hath no inward principle of skill to enable him, in comparison of a skilfull workeman; the one is more painfull then the other, but the latter hath more ease in his worke. And hence it is, that selfe hath so continuall a toile to hold correspondence with grace: as fast as corruption rebells, shee falls to damming and stopping the course of it, but the more she dammes up the passage, the higher the waters swell and rise, so that she must needs give them some way and course at last, and grow weary of resistance: whereas the poore soule whose heart is humbled and broken, feeles the streame and torrent to be turned another way, and so she needs not alway resist and dimme it up; because its prevented by a stronger motion. And in truth selfe-violence is no better then self-sloth in this respect; for she findes as small fruit of her strife as of her ease; neither are blessed: when she is lazy, she is shared with accusation, and when she is satagent and busie, shee is discouraged with ill successe: the Lord aiming at this, that so shee may be weary of her selfe. There seemes (I grant) for the present, while selfe keepes her motion, a great deale of zeale in selfe performances: as one said of himselfe, that while he

Esay 30.

he praied out of himſelfe, he praied with far more zeale, paſſion and expreſſion, then when hee praied by the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication: Selfe being very full and free in her owne element, but barren and off the hookes, if out of it: And this violence may appeare further in the frequency and difficulty of ſelfe-performances; for as wee ſee where there be feweſt good and ſolid diſhes of meate at a table, there will bee the more ſlight ones with their covers upon them, as if there were ſome great matter under: ſo is it with Selfe, the leſſe ſubſtance ſhe hath, the more ſhews & ſhadowes, the more pompe and oſtentation. The Phariſees and thoſe Hypocrites in *Micah*, were fuller of their traditions, waſhings and cleanſings, offerings of coſtly and exceſſive ſervices, then the faithfull worſhippers; who reſted rather in a little and good, *viz* to walke humbly and righteouſly with God, then in a world of droſſe. As a drunkard ſo long as he can uſe his tongue and his feete, thinkes himſelfe ſober; whereas the truly temperate ſuſpects himſelfe at every turne: ſo here: ſelfe lookes at her owne motion, not how regular and orderly it is. As a boy unskilfull in writing, when his hand is led, delights ſtill to ſtir it, and to move his hand of himſelfe, and ſo blurs and blots more then he writes, ſo ſelfe will be ſtirring and doing, full of her owne ſpirit, in praying, faſting, hearing and the like; no man can be zealous enough to pleaſe her, Chriſt himſelfe was not good enough for a ſelfe-pleaſing hypocrite. The Lord loves no double diligent ones: but thoſe who being led by the ſpirit of ſelfedeniall and grace, reſt themſelves upon the power of a promiſe, (not to be idle, but) as abhorring to make more haſte then good ſpeed.

Matth. 23. Mica 6.

Laſtly, Self if ſhe be defeated of what ſhe would, is ſore diſquieted and unſetled. The greater her heat and violence was in motion, the deeper is her diſcontent, if croſſed: Concerning which, I ſhall have more occaſion to ſpeake in the next verſe: Here only it ſhall bee ſufficient to give a touch of it: When Selfe is held off and delaied, ſhe falls upon God, Oh! what a wofull fruit of all my labour is this, that God ſhould ſo long keepe me from my deſires and thus long croſſe me: hence come cavills againſt God, as if he did them wrong, thus to diſappoint them; ſelfe is querulous *Eſay* 58. *Mal.* 3. full of tedious accuſations, and baskings of her ſelfe (much like one that cannot ſwimme, who yet will beat the waters,) and this comes partly from preſumption, and partly from bondage, as thinking ſhe ſhould deſerve better from God, and yet feels all ill within: whereas a poore ſoule being beaten off one way, yet feeling a ſupport within, girds her ſelfe the more about, and looking at the unchangeable faithfulneſſe of God, interprets his delaies no otherwiſe, then the Syrophœnician did Chriſts anſwers not to be cordiall, but trying her faith & ſelf-deniall: O Lord (ſaith ſhe) although thou beateſt me off, thou meaneſt not to reject me, for that were contrary to thy office, to ſave the ſcattered ones of Iſrael. Therefore (O Lord) here I lye at thy feete, if thou kick me away, and have no pleaſure in me, I can ſay nothing, doe with me as thou wilt; I am not at mine owne but thy diſpoſe, and if it ſeem good to thy wiſdome to deferre me, I ſhall thinke it meeter for the time preſent, then to be ſatisfied, ſince its ever beſt for me to be as thou wilt have me; knowing it ſhall be one day as thou haſt promiſed.

4. Her diſappointment.

Eſay 58. Mal. 3.

Matth. 15.

2 Kings

Eſay 40.

And ſurely well may I adde this fourth marke to the former; for as ſelfe hath no bounds of humility and modeſty, when ſhe is pleaſed with her duties and affections, finding that fruit and ſucceſſe which ſhe fancieth to her owne labours, but thinkes her content and peace to come from grace; ſo when her ſparkles are out and gone (wherewith ſhee compaſſed her ſelfe) then ſhe growes ſlaviſh, dead hearted, diſcontent; and yet (rather then ſhe would by ſuch experience renounce her owne crazy hold) ſhe will returne to her old courſe, and trie what further hopes ſhe ſhall enjoy by her new attempts, till ſhe be forced at laſt to lie downe in confuſion, & repent of her trade too late: of this ſute alſo is the carriage of ſuch, as upbraid God for his hard dealing with them, by the better ſucceſſe of others who are got before them; this ſavors of ſome deſire and emulation (I grant) but it comes from many pangs of ſelfe, as eaſe, muttering that they cannot have their wills of God upon leſſe adoe, alſo of rankeneſſe and ſullen unthankefulneſſe, for that they have already. And although I doe not ſay, that all in this caſe of deſeate, doe directly give God over and quite revolt from him, as *Naaman* here would have done; yet they returne to their old acquaintance with ſelfe, and ſo welter out their daies in utter miſery: underſtand me in all this diſcourſe to ſpeake of Selfe (as it is unſubdued in the hypocrite) not as it is a relique of evill in thoſe who belong to grace. Thus much for the carriage of it.

The third generall: The end of Selfe, ſhe alway aimes at her owne ends.

The third and laſt point, is the end of Selfe, which is ſutable to the ground and proceedings thereof. The ſumme is, Selfe lookes at her owne ends, and ends in her ſelfe; all her ſcope is, by her long trade, ſhuffiings, ſubrilties and flingings about, to rivet her ſelfe ſo deeply into her own way and device, that at the laſt, ſhe may be out of all gunſhot and danger, and reſt in her ſelfe-religion without diſturbance: To this end ſhe doth ſo much harden her ſelfe againſt the conviction of the word, when ſhe knoweth or may know her eſtate to be dangerous; even that ſhe might at laſt be wholly quit of all ſuch callings upon, and gaſterings by the ſpirit of God and her owne conſcience, and ſo (through Satans malice) keepe her owne poſſeſſion in peace, even as if ſhe would ſecretly ſteale away Gods grace without his conſent, and triumph over him, by having her will on him: The poore ſoule boaſts in God, but ſhe in her ſelfe, and ſacrificeth to her owne nets; till the Lord by his terrors ſlaite her, and with the beſome, if not of his law, yet of his wrath, ſweepe downe thoſe cobwebbes which with much adoe ſhe hath woven. The end of the Lord in the manifold turnagaines and doubts, feares and diſtempers which a poor ſoule meets with, is quite contrary, even that being tried with her owne corruptions, ſhe might give over her owne inventions and be weary of fighting any longer under the banner of Selfe, and caſt themſelves upon his promiſe, and ſo put the Lord in the ſtead of ſelfe, to be all in all with them, and returne no more to their old trade: I ſay, the Lords aime in all his, is this, to make ſelfe ſtincke unto them, and (as the proverbe ſaith, the corruption of the fineſt matter ſtinkes worſt, ſo) that the finer more ſubtill and wiredrawne ſelfe hath beene in deceiving the ſoule, the more the ſoule may abhorre her after a divorce once made. But as for ſelfe, ſhe is moſt deplored and deſperate in that wherein a poore ſoule is moſt happy, that is in the end of her courſe, by that time

See Hoſea 10. 1. Zach.7.5.6.

rime that the latter is at reſt, the former is come about to moſt uter miſery: For though ſhe be where ſhe would be, yet becauſe ſhe is deceived in that ſhee hath choſen, ſhe muſt therefore feed upon aſhes inſtead of bread, and vanity as a whirlewind muſt carry her away, as the Lord by *Eſay* ſpeakes of Idolaters.

Eſay 57.

A barren principle can bring forth no other fruit; all labour ſo taken is as a ſtone rolled upon the hill, violently returning at length upon the roller: if ſhee would have ſubjected her ſelfe to be led by the ſpirit of grace, ſhe ſhould have obtained the ſame ends which the Lord ſeeks from a ſaved ſoul, that is to adore the wonderfull and inconceivable glory and riches of his grace in Chriſt, and to ſwallow and drowne ſelfe in this ſtreame. And as once a wiſe man hearing a proud fellow boaſt of his land, brought him a ſhort mappe of Athens, and bid him ſhew whereabouts his lands lay, which abated the high thoughts of the yong Gentleman exceedingly: So doth the Lord ſhew to his owne people the Map of his glory, which is the whole ground, way and end of ſaving loſt mankinde; which when they wiſely behold, ſelfe vaniſheth and finds no place; for if that which moved the Lord ſo principally to pitty faln man, was not the good of the creature, (for then the more ſaved, the more his end ſhould have beene fulfilled) but the magnifying of himſelfe, and of his ſundry excellencies, which elſe muſt have beene concealed; and had it not beene that God had reſpected this, man had lien ſtill in his woe; how can a poore creature behold this gulfe, but of neceſſity the thought of it muſt make ſelfe and her ends to be deſpiſed, as not worthy to be named the ſame day, much leſſe to come into competition with God, and to foreſtall him of his due, that ſelfe might be clothed with his ſpoiles? Oh! the very image of ſuch a baſe conceit is loathſome in ſuch an heart, as knowes that while God is ſerved, ſhe muſt ſtand by and bee content to waite, as happy if this waiting of hers upon Gods ends may bring her to be happy at laſt in him and with him; as counting it happier to periſh in glorifying him, (if it could be) then to be glorious in her ſelfe. And ſo much for the anſwer to this queſtion, *viz.* how the nature of this enemy may be perceived in her degrees and ſteps: now I come to the uſe of the whole doctrine.

Vſe 1. Admonition. 1. Branch. To the unregenerate. Three particulars. 1. Behold the tricks of ſelf.

The firſt is, to admoniſh all who would not loſe their labour and travaile in the matter of grace, to diſcover and abandon the concurrence of ſelfe in that weighty buſineſſe: And this I urge upon two ſorts: Firſt, ſeekers, Secondly, obtainers: Firſt, behold the tricks and fetches of this enemy; Then conſider the danger and ſad conſequence of loſing all our labour for the ſake of it: And laſtly, reſolve in both reſpects for ever (through mercy) to renounce it. For the former, infinite are thoſe ſubtilties which are in the bugit of this traitor: I will name two or three by which a wiſe heart will gueſſe at the reſt, and eſpecially at her owne. One is this, Selfe will not onely deny much for grace, but even deny her ſelfe (in ſome kinde) and yet, all to uphold and ſtrengthen her ſelfe in another and more beloved way to her ſelfe: wherein ſelfe reſembles the novices of ſubtill Jeſuits, who for the obtaining of an higher ſelfe, which is ſalvation and Canonizing for Saints, dare attempt the murder of Princes themſelves, with the hazard of life and all. How will ſelfe

2 Kings

1. Selfe denies her ſelfe in leſſer objects to purchaſe her ſelfe in greater.

ſerve her ſelfe into the moſt cloſe and powerfull ordinances of extraordinary nature, as faſting and prayer, denying the eaſe of many common and formall profeſſors; and all with a rotten and unſound heart, that they may imbarke themſelves (though not into oppreſſion and rapine, as thoſe groſſe hypocrites in *Eſay*, yet) in the ſtrength & perſwaſion of their zeale and ſoundneſſe of heart, and hatred of ſin, and love of the welfare of Gods Church? whereas no ſooner theſe duties are over, but they meet with the ſame poiſons of heart, abiding and reigning in them with woefull impurity and defilement of conſcience: I will not here mention the baſe counterfeit ſelfe-abſtinences of Popiſh hypocrites, in their masked ſelfe-denialls of marriage, mony, converſe and trading in the world, ſoft apparell, lodging and the like liberties; that they might hereby winne heaven with greater ſelfe-love; and that they might nouzle up themſelves the more unſuſpectedly in their ſecret uncleanneſſe, hoording up of treaſure, and fulfilling the luſt of their fleſh: neither will I inſiſt in the ſelfe-deniall of time-ſervers, who ſometimes for the ſtrengthening themſelves in promiſcuous luſt, deny the benefit of marriage to themſelves; or to climbe up to preferment, abſtaine from common drunkenneſſe, and open uncleanneſſe, or with *Abſalon*, conceale their horrible pride for a time, (if they finde it may commend them to the world) that it may bee thought they are courteous, faire, and of loving and gentle demeanure: all which, (when once they have gotten what they would) they lay aſide and returne to their natures: But I rather inſtance in ſecret paſſages of this ſubtilty.

As, when a man denies his proud heart her ſcope, leſt it ſhould bring him to ill report and reproach; or, I would deny my ſelfe in my liberty, for prayer and duties, that I might ſtop the wound of my conſcience; or, I would take paines in the office of a Magiſtrate, or Miniſter, or Townſman, to ſee order kept, Religion maintained, poore relieved; I would give much to good uſes, and the like: but why? to purchaſe to my ſelfe the repute of a zealous, a pious, a mercifull man: Thus *Ananias* and *Sapphira* were content to deny a chiefe piece of their eſtate, that they might enjoy a farre leſſe part of it, with great honour in the Church; or, a man will do all which belongs to an outward profeſſor, to the end he may retaine himſelfe in that laſt evill of unbeliefe, or unreformedneſſe of heart: So of the reſt. Conſider now what incredible ſubtilty this is, to do much more then a man need to doe for the nouriſhing of ſome privy evill, which it ſhall not boote him one pin to reſerve, and (for ought he ſhall gaine by it) he might practice it and all other openly and fare never the worſe. This for one inſtance. Another may be this, what ſubtilty and cloſe cunning is this, to doe that under colour of Religion, which might well enough bee conveied by the fouleſt meanes? who abhorres it not that *Iezabel* ſhould commence her cruell murther of an innocent under the pretext of a faſt, and by ſuborned inſtruments, which might better have beſeemed the moſt villanous cut-throat in a Country to have done? And yet this is the ſubtilty of ſelfe, to maske a proud, vaineglorious heart, an heart full of hollowneſſe, worldlineſſe and treachery, with the cover of Gods choiſeſt ordinances: what is this but to hold God at the ſtaves end of his own ſervice, and then to be deepeſt in duties, when

Acts 5.

2. A ſecond inſtance: To maske ſinne under holineſſe. 1 Kings 21.9.

yet

yet the heart aimeth at cloaking her ſelfe and her deepeſt licentiouſneſſe and falſhood? What is this but double iniquity? What is this ſave to capitulate with God, to be godly and proud ſtill, worldly and religious, devout and vain-glorious, and that under priviledge? If ſuch ſcurſe were onely coloured with baſe Popiſh varniſh, it were a leſſe evill: But to ſet ſuch baſe wares forth upon Gods ſtall, which were too baſe to be vended upon the baſeſt ſtall in a market, how odious is it? and how wicked a thing is it for one that might as good cheap be an open malefactor, to chuſe religion as a ſtage to act it on? Nay further, what is it but to bee vile in meere villany and cool bloud, when a man might be godly better cheap then he is wicked? When a man chuſes rather a perpetuall vexation of heart, and a miſery of condition, never quiet, alway forced to live by ſhifts and ſubtill devices, rather then a ſetled peace and content? Oh! that there ſhould be ſuch ſcurſe in the ſoule under hand, that it ſhould redeeme the loathneſſe and difficulty of being once converted to God, with the deere price of perpetuall ſelf-ſlavery to no purpoſe!

3. Inſtance: To defile it ſelfe in that it knoweth. Jude, v. 10.

What ſubtilty againe is it for a man to defile himſelfe in the things he knoweth, as S. *Iude* ſpeakes of thoſe falſe teachers? To nouriſh ſuch an incurable and inſenſible love of a beloved luſt in the heart, as he knowes to be ſo, and yet dare live in the practice of it, under a pretence, as baſe and confeſſed? Would not any laugh at the hypocriſie of *Balaam*, who would needs goe with *Balaacs* ſervants, under colour of doing no more then God would permit; and yet, even the bare going with them was againſt Gods command? Was it like that hee would have denied his gaine to pleaſe God, had not God over-ruled him by force from curſing his people? This we all deteſt; but the ſubtilty of ſelfe in our own way, we diſcerne not: and yet we are content our eyes ſhould bee blindfolded, that we might ſin ſecurely. Who abhorres not that debauched Jew, who being loath to miſſe the opportunity of a ſhip, and yet afraid to breake his Sabbath, was content to be ſuch a foole, as to hire one to thruſt him into the ſhip by violence, that ſo hee might bee blameleſſe? and yet ſelfe is as ſubtile and debauched, and wee will not abhorre it. Endleſſe it were to ſpeake of all. What falſhood of heart is this, to pretend that Gods glory is chiefe with us, when yet (the occaſion being offered) we chuſe rather God ſhould want his glory, rather then we croſſed of our wills? That either he muſt be honoured our way, or by our ſelves as the inſtruments, or elſe wee care not whether hee bee honoured at all? What is this but ſelfe-eſteeme and pride? Whereas wee know, *David* bleſſed God, that (ſeeing hee might not build him a Temple) *Salomon* might build it, not looking at the doer, ſo God might have it built? And *Paul* would have Chriſt preached any way, rather than not preached; by any as well as by himſelfe, rather then not at all: yea, chooſe rather to loſe his owne happineſſe, then Iſrael ſhould not be ſaved.

4. Inſtance: Pretence of preferring God, yet ſeeking our ſelves.

Numb. 22. 19.

1 Chron. 22. 9. 12.

To draw to an end, what ſubtilty is this, to imagine that the offering of God more ſervices then he ever commanded, ſhould diſcharge the conſcience for breaking ſuch commands as hee expreſly enjoyned? What elſe was the religion of them, Micah. 6. ſave to baffle Gods eyes with their ſelfe-worſhip? And this is a true marke of Selfe, to outbid true worſhipers in the multitude of our devotions, that we might bee diſpenſed

5. Inſtance: To offer to God more then he askes.

2 Kings

fed within our underbidding of the price which God calls for: why is this, but that we might be ſpared in the maine work of ſelling ſelf and all? our out bidding the Lords owne asking, is no marke of our ſelfe-deniall, but rather of ſubtill-ſelfe, which would teach God to pitch a new price upon Chriſt, but not offer him that price which he demandeth: when the Lord bids thee bring nothing, wilt thou bring him thy coſt? and when his price is thy ſelfe, doſt thou offer him other things to keep back that price? what is an handfull of braſſe worth to him, when he demands a dram of pure gold? why doe we loath Popiſh ſuperogations, ſave that they come ſhort in their kinde of that which God asketh? within the kinde, offer to him the leaſt dramme of ſelfe-deniall and fourdneſſe; but elſe out of kinde, no performance is welcome, ſeeme it never ſo plentifull: what ſhall thy ſubtilty do thee good, when thy iſſue and Gods iſſue will not joine? thou bringeſt in prayers, teares, duties, devotions, abſtinences, affections; and he called for none of them as his price, but thy will, thy wiſdome, thy conceit, thy ſelfe? give him his asking, and as for the other, thou ſhalt be in them all, as a defiled clout, and they ſhall be no more unto thee (in point of Chriſt) then if thou haſt never done them. And this may ſerve for the firſt branch.

Prov. 16. 23.

2. Branch of Admonition. See the danger of Selfe.

Secondly, conſider the danger of this diſeaſe: enough hath beene ſaid of it in the reaſons before: Now I adde two or three things to the former. And firſt to urge that maine danger in the doctrine mentioned: That it threatens to deprive the ſoule of grace it ſelfe when all is done, and to throw downe all the falſe building thereof at once, as if one ſhould with his foote daſh a little childs houſe of oyſterſhels which it hath built with much labour. Now what a ſad thing were this, to loſe the good things which thou haſt earned with much travaile, ſo that thou ſhouldeſt never enjoy the fruit of all thy toile and labour under the Sun of Gods ordinances, nor eate of the worke of thine hands, what a miſery were it? if it were but to loſe the coſt of thy plowed field, thy compaſſe and husbandry, the coſt of thine orchard and garden, planting, graffing, ſetting, ſowing, how unpleaſing a thing is it? But then what is the loſſe of a few buſhells of wheat, plumbs or apples, berries or flowers, to the loſſe of Chriſt thy eternall crop? Selfe will come betweene thee and home in this kind, if thou prevent her not. The Eſtrich laies her egs in the ſand, (as *Iob* ſaith) and leaves them to their lot, to the feet of beaſts to tread on: but why? God hath denied her underſtanding to lay them in ſecret, and to hatch them: Art thou deſtitute of underſtanding to value ſo meanly thy coſt, in hearing, in queſtions, in travaile, in trialls, in duties, as to forget what they coſt thee? If a Schollar ſhould ſee all his note-books & papers, a great rich man, all his ſilver and gold, his evidences; a Farmer all his corne and graine to bee conſumed; would it not ſting him? Are they not the fruit of his travell, which every man naturally more priſeth, then a thing that befalls him which he never tooke paines for? when the ſhip makes ſhipwracke in the haven, what ſaith the merchant? It grieves me as much for the loſſe of my voiage, as for my ſhip; is this the iſſue of my three yeares ſailing over the ſeas? my adventures, my exchange of wares, mine eſcapes of rockes and quicksands? ſo ſhouldſt thou ſay in this caſe: Oh! it grieves me as much for the

Eſay 55. 2. 2 Joh. 8.

Selfe forfeits all her labour and coſt in worſhip and duties.

Job 39. 13. 14.

the

the loſſe of ſo many ſweet Sabbaths, Sacraments, Communions, Ordinances, as for mine owne ſoule, ſhall I thus lay heapes upon heapes and die for thirſt? how much better had it been that I had never travelled to beate downe ſome forraine enemy of luſt and prophaneſſe, then that this inbred elfe, this ſelfe and ſelfe-love as a viper ſhould eate out my bowells and defeate me of heaven?

2 Kings

Judg. 15.16. 18.

To what end ſhould I come up to the City as farre as the ſuburbs, to lie downe there and die for lacke of heart to enter the City gate? Thus haſt thou done (O poore ſoule) thou haſt given faire onſets and hopes; Thou haſt felt thy ſelfe loſt, mourned, priſed Chriſt, laboured and held out longer then many of thy companions; here thou haſt left ſome behinde thee, ſticking in the deepe ſlow of the earth, others have turned backe having the winde, the ſunne, the ſtormes of perſecutions, croſſes and enemies in their face; others in their pleaſures and luſts which have overtooke them; and ſhall a boſome enemy doe thee as much hurt as theſe? and ſhalt thou for all thy twelve houres toile fare no better then they who came in at the laſt? Oh! conſider how deſperate thy caſe will be, and what a world of regret loſſe of heaven will be, when ſo narrow and ſmall an oddes muſt deprive thee: Oh! it will ſting thee as fire, to ſee that ſuch an offer of an invaluable purchaſe was made thee, which thou biddeſt faire for and forſookeſt at laſt in a tech, that thou wouldeſt not give a penny more, whether have it or loſe it: This parting penny ſhall ſting thee as much, as now it troubles thee little: Oh! there is but a little oddes betweene thee and home, thinke that now the loving heart, the heart bloud of the Lord Jeſus, wooes thee in this manner, ſaying, one thing yet remaines; beſides all thy preparations, adde but this, let none of theſe be thy Chriſt, miſtake them not, they are but ſparkles comming from my fire, that onely can put life into thee, deny theſe, let me and my promiſe be thy pardon, thy peace, thy ſtrength, and thou haſt bought the pearle: I ſay, do but conſider the miſchiefe of this ſelfe, which cauſes in thee this ſad miſtake, and will worke in thee ſo remedileſſe repentance.

Beſides in the ſecond place, the ſurviving and outlaſting nature of this enemy ſhould ſtrike ſad thoughts into us: Doubtleſſe irs the conceit of many (in whoſe boſome it liveth) that at one time or other they ſhall bee rid of it, it ſhall not alway lodge in them: but in the meane time that pleaſingneſſe of it within the boſome doth bewitch them ſo, that they reſt in wanzing hope of it, without ſerious uſing of ſuch meanes as might ſerve to caſt it out of them; and ſo their thoughts periſh, and ſelfe lives ſtill in them and ſo will doe; ſome Sermon, faſt or meanes (they hope) ſhall deſtroy it, (for they would bee rid of it) but this enemy hath nine lives and will never die quite, onely they might quell the poiſon and power of it, if their hearts were ſerious; but then the meanes to effect it, require ſuch attendance, that they chuſe rather to ſit ſtill with eaſe: And although they doe take good paines, yet they doe but make themſelves beleeve they would be rid of it; for indeed long cuſtome hath ſtupified their hearts, and made them ſenſleſſe of their ayle, they have loſt their old tenderneſſe and feeling of the miſchiefe of it, and therefore they carry it with them to Church, to faſting, to ſacraments, and to all good duties, but

2. Danger. The ſurviving nature of it.

2 Kings

but they loſe it in none of them all, it returnes as it went, and out-lives them all. Alas! no wonder! how ſhould a body of death be deſtroyed by ſhadowes, except that body of life, or rather that quickning Spirit, be brought in to caſt it out, how ſhould it give place? What wonder (if after all vowes, and experience of the contrary) ſtill Selfe of uncharitableneſſe, privie revenge, cenſuring, unmercifulneſſe, ſelfe-eaſe, ſelfe in the creature, ſurvives in the ſoule, and out-lives all affections of complaint and diſlike, ſo long as the ſtronger man is not really ſought unto to caſt out this ſtrong and to beare it downe by his promiſe and power, with head and ſhoulders? This would make the ſoule reſolute and cordiall, to ſay, I am reſolved indeed to be rid of it: for I would not elſe have done that I have done to caſt it out, I would never really have admitted the Lord Jeſus into me to doe it: for he comes ſtrong, and will throw him out ere he have done. He that doth but wiſh a bad and noyſome Tenant were out of his houſe, may hold him in and loſe his rent all his life long: but if he get a writ of (*ejectio firmæ*) and bring the Sheriffe in perſon to throw him out by force and armes, he may be beleeved, that he would have him out. Doe then in this caſe as the poore Shunamite in the caſe of her dead childe, comming and moaning to *Eliſha*, when he haſtily ſent *Gehazi* with his ſtaffe, to lay it upon the childes face; that would not ſerve her turne: ſhe caught the Prophet by the feet, ſaying: As the Lord liveth, and as thy ſoul liveth, I will not leave thee, and lind not, till ſhe had brought him to the corps, where he found the worke to be of more hardneſſe, then the laying on of a ſtaffe by *Gehazi*, himſelfe by the omnipotency of God was onely able to doe it.

Bare offers & emp'ements, or means, cannot encounter a body of death.

Luke 11.21.

2 King. 4. 30.

3. Danger: The cloſeneſſe & tewardneſſe of Selfe.

Thirdly, adde this one more, the cloſeneſſe and inwardneſſe of this enemy of Selfe; conſider how ſecret and ſcarce diſcernable it is: Take one or two inſtances for many: in the uſe of ſpirituall communion of the Saints, how difficult is it to diſcover the cloſeneſſe of this Selfe? and how privily it ſcrues it ſelfe into ſuch fellowſhip; not for the true and ſpirituall ends thereof: but for ſome by reſpects, as the admiration of holy perſons, contentation to a ſelfe-loving heart ſeeking her credit, or perhaps ſome knowledge, or the like. Oh! how hard is it to finde out this, that the ſcope of the ſoule is meerly and ſimply to draw up (as with the bucket of an hungry empty heart) that grace & underſtanding which is hidden in it? Again, ſo cloſe and ſecret is ſelfe, that it is a great difficulty to diſcerne ſelfe-joy, ſelfe-content comming from the creature, from entire and ſound content flowing from Chriſt. It is as hard as to ſeparate confuſed ſorts of corn mixed together: Not but that the difference is great, but earthly Selfe ſo ſcrues and mixes it ſelfe with religious. that oft-times the ſoule markes not the difference; ſo ſhee may fare well, and pleaſe her ſelfe, ſhee doth not ſo diſcern the principle whence it comes, but either preferres the content of the creature, or elſe mixes and confounds it with the beſt content, till the creature creep in too farre, the heart wax wanton and defiled; yea, ſo ſnarled, that it muſt coſt her the vomiting of her morſels, ere ſhe can recover a cleare appetite againe; ſo cloſely, and as it were betweeene the marrow and the bones, doth this lurking enemy lodge within us. So much for the danger.

Now

Now from both theſe conſiderations, be we admoniſhed, to conceive of, to abandon and caſt out this enemy (I might call it as *Paul* calls death) this laſt enemy of our peace. Overcome this, and all other ſhall give place: as we would obtaine that we run for, ſo (in Gods feare) let us beware of this enemy. Let us not bee as that foole in *Salomon*, when all is ſayd, Though we bray him in a mortar, yet will not this Selfe depart. It is even as *Saul* was, whom as *Samuel* found, ſo heo was faint to leave with this wofull marke, Honour me before the people: ſo ſaith ſhe, Forgoe not thy ſelfe; but if the doctrine be true, ſhee will bee that laſt foe which will keep thee from converſion: Then either renounce her, or elſe ſay as that wofull wretch ſaid of his harlot, I will have her, though I go to hell with her. So it muſt be, whether thou ſay ſo or not: therefore renounce not thy Lord Jeſus, and his free grace, to melt, to ſofteo, to ſave and change thy heart for the ſake of her with whom (if thou wilt needs keep her in thy boſome) thou canſt not poſſibly have a ſoft, a tender, a repenting heart: thou canſt not thrive to heaven-ward, ſhe will lye in wait for thy pretious ſoule, ſhe will be as a canker to thy growth and proſpering: thou ſhalt toyle and moyle, but ſhe ſhall blaſt thy labours, and (as once one ſaid of the cankers of a ſtate) what's become of all our great Treaties, Voyages? Nothing: ſo I may ſay here, whats become of all my ſtrife? how chance I grow no faſter? Surely nothing: Thou art as thou wert, if not much worſe, heaven is further off, an hard heart neerer the doore. Oh thou art ſmitten, and yet knewſt not who ſmote thee. But now thou doſt prevent the blow! I may ſay of this Selfe, as we ſay of Simoniacall contracts for Benefices, that ſuch Simony creates a lapſe. Will any Miniſter having a living freely offered him by his Patron, chuſe to contract for money? Is he not well worthy to loſe his living by lapſe? The Lord Jeſus is offered thee freely by thy Patron of Heaven, the Lord Almighty: wil nothing then ſerve thee but Simony, & to come to it by thy ſelfe? Thou deſerveſt to forfeit him, and to be caſt out by lapſe. Thy money (O Selfe!) periſh with thee; becauſe that thou thinkeſt by thy price to obtaine ſuch a gift: Lo! thou haſt no fellowſhip with this buſineſſe!

I conclude therefore, lay not out thy ſilver for no bread, nor thy labour for that which profits not: eate good things, and let thy ſoul delight in fatneſſe; enjoy the fruit of thy travell, and refuſe no pains to caſt neſt & neſt-egge on the dung-hill. Truſt God upon his bare word for a principle of ſtrength from Gods fountaine, which will hold out both Winter and Summer, when the Brookes of Tema ſhall be dried up. Ceaſe joyning Selfe with Grace: Doe not thinke it ſo deſolate a worke to hang upon a promiſe, except thy ſelfe have a finger in the worke, and feel ſome warmth from thine owne feathers. Bad digeſtion in the ſtomacke is not bettered by concoction: ſuch as thy root is, ſuch the branches will bee: and an errour in the foundation will meet thee perpetually in the building, ſo that either all muſt be puld downe againe (which is tedious) or elſe thou muſt ruſh forward with an uncomfortable ſpirit, and upbraiding conſcience. Falſe mixtures are odious to God, and hee who forbad the field to bee ſowne with two graines, or a garment to be made of linnen and wollen, meant another thing (for what are theſe to him)

Preſſing of the admonition.
1 Cor. 15.
1 Sam. 15.
Act. 8.
Eſay 55. 2.
Eſay 53. end.

2 Kings

him) but abhorred the ſoile of the ſoule ſhould be ſowne with ſelfe and Chriſt, and the backe apparelled with Chriſts robe upon an inward garment of thine owne: Thou chuſeſt to be cloathed upon, but God will have thee naked, for what uſe is there of covering one that is covered already? The mixing of divers heapes of corne together mars both; peaſe or tares are good in their kind, if ſeverall, but if mixed, tares are ſoile in wheate, nay the wheat is marred by them. Duties and affections, if conſidered, as fruits of Chriſt and his promiſe, are good things; but if they mixe and incorporate, then they prove ſoile and marre all. Filch not from God to beſtow upon Selfe; feed her not with Gods dainties, rob not God to ſatisfie her, & to nouriſh up thy baſe heart againſt the ſimplicity of grace; begge of the Lord, that he would teach thee to diſcerne copper from gold, and to ſhew thee the face of this Selfe in his glaſſe; to take out of thine heart, this ſlaviſh, baſe, unbeteaming and underbidding nature: be affraid leſt thou ſhouldeſt undergo thy ſelfe in purchaſing the pearle, looking more at the one bird in the hand, then two in the buſh, and beeing ſo pennywiſe to detaine Gods due price, and to keepe ſelfe with her brats, ſelfe-pettiſhneſſe, worldlineſſe, eaſe, ſloth, ſelfe-credit, ſelf-will, wit and inſtinct; that thou are pound fooliſh, and depriveſt thy ſelfe of a pearle worth both all that thou forgoeſt (with an hundred fold gaine) and heaven it ſelfe at laſt. Hate Selfe for her ſelfe (in point of her enmity and contrariety of Spirit to the Lord Jeſus) and then her branches will ſoone wither and loſe their ſap and life. And this may ſerve for the former branch of this uſe of Admonition.

2 Cor.5.5.

2. Branch to the godly.

The ſecond branch of this watchword may reach to the godly themſelves, who muſt know, that although they have eſcaped this gulfe in the maine point of beleeving (a mercy deſerving the thankſgiving of their whole life) yet ſhe is not quite expelled from being an inmate and daily pricke and goad in their ſide while they live a perpetuall *Peninnah*. Let ſuch then wonder, that the Lord ſhould ever bring them out of the endleſſe maze of this ſelfe, and give them broken, humble and plaine hearts; to avoid the thouſand turnings and doublings of a baſe ſpirit, and to tread the true path of wiſdome, leading to life. Oh! (ſhould they ſay) how loath would I be now to hazard my ſoule upon the ſucceſſe of former labours? how loath would I bee in this barren world and baſe heart, to have the matter put to a venture? Oh! I would not for a world, be to beginne againe; a thouſand prayſes to him that hath not put my ſoule to ſuch a perill, and not ſo onely, but, be warned alſo to be ware, leſt when this divell cannot deprive us of heaven, yet it ſhould defeate us of our other hopes, to grow in grace, to joy in our poſſeſſion, to live by faith, to be found in our worſhipping of God and duties, to be fruitfull in graces, to ſerve our time, to bear our croſſes, to perſevere in our courſe, & to be ready for Gods comming. What is it but this wofull inmate that hinders in all theſe? what but this ſelfe and preſuming of our ſelves cauſes grace to be ſo unthrifty and to hang downe the head? what but aſcribing to our ſelves in our meanes uſing, makes them ſo unfruitfull? what but our utmoſt taking of our liberties, pleaſures, eaſe and denying our ſelves nothing which hath but the leaſt colour of lawfulneſſe, cauſes Chriſtians to be ſo full of ſorrow and repentance? what is that which

Selfe a perpetuall enemy to the regenerate.

1 Sam. 1.

glues

glues us ſo faſt to the creature that we are loath to part with it, for peace of conſcience, or the attaining of heaven, loth to die and goe hence? what cauſed *Iob* ſo much ſorrow ſave the cure of this diſeaſe, to teach him to abhorre himſelfe? what ſave Selfe in the creature, wedding our ſelves to our next hand props of children, wealth, meanes, welfare, cauſes the Lord to cut off theſe members altogether, that (as in the body which hath a leg or arme cut off) the ſpirits might not goe to that which is dead, but that which liveth, even from the ſtreame to the fountaine? That we may learne by experience, if the baſe creature be ſo ſweet, in which ſo ſmall a dramme of the Lord is, what is then the God of the creature worth?

2 Kings

Job 42.2.

Why ſhould the Lord afflict the godly with ſo much ſorrow, ſave this, that they will not be brought to improve the Lord for his ſtrength to ſubdue their luſts and corruptions in ſpeciall, to make good his promiſes, to be alſufficient in ourward bleſſings, to uphold us in our ſtraits? But we content our ſelves in this, that we have found him good to us in pardon and reconciliation; thinking the danger to be paſt, and our ſelves free from taking care for the ſubduing of this wofull Selfe in the courſe of ſanctification: I might inſtance in twenty particulars, take it in theſe two: what ſhould ſo much ſting a poore ſoule as this, that out of her owne doores an enemy ſhould come forth: even this Selfe, (lurking in the ſecret corners of the heart, unmortified) ſelfe in revenge, in unmercifulneſſe, in deadneſſe of ſpirit, ſecurity and pride, wantonneſſe and unbeliefe, which ſhould diſhonor that God, and wound that Spirit of grace, which hath ſo lovingly vouchſafed to rid us of our firſt guilt and feare of wrath, that we might be his owne redeemed ones, and not ſerve our ſelves? Againe, if Selfe be ſo dangerous as to hold off the unbeleeving ſoule from faith: how dangerous is it, in ſtopping the paſſages of our comfort dayly from the promiſe, or in threatning us ſome miſchiefe, ere we finiſh our courſe with perſeverance? Could he that hath runne a long and faire race toward the priſe, and is well neere come to it, endure one who ſhould ſtand armed and by force ſtoppe him from getting the ſilver bell? how ſhould that enemy (even this wicked *Haman*) bee abhorred by us, that ſhould defeate us thus? yea, if it were but the making of that doore of heaven, more narrow in the entrance then it need be, whereas the Lord hath ſet it wide open to receive us after our poore pilgrimage is ended, how odious ſhould ſuch an adverſary be to us? But I returne to other uſes of the doctrine. This may ſerve for both branches of Admonition.

2 Pet. 1. 11.

Vſe 2. Terror in two Branches. 1. If Selfe in the moſt forward profeſſors be ſo dangerous, what ſhall become of the looſe libertine and ungodly wretch?

A ſecond uſe is Terror, and that in two Branches: Firſt, to all prophane ones and contemners of the Goſpel, and of the power of converſion: Looke about ye, and be affraid of your condition! if ſuch as are ſo fair for ſalvation, and have paſſed through ſo many ſteps toward it who both in their judgements of others, (and perhaps in their owne deluded opinions) are out of danger, yet faile of their purpoſes, becauſe they ſtrive unlawfully, where ſhall ſuch as you appeare? Oh yee libertines joviall and merry companions, who make Religion a vaile for your looſeneſſe, and your civility an excuſe for your ungodlineſſe! did yee never duly weigh this doctrine? wofull creatures, (who care for no Religion, but ſo

2 Kings

farre as it wil ſtand with your luſts) what face will ye behold the judge withall when ye ſhall ſee thouſands of all ſorts, both Miniſters who have preached Chriſt in the ſtreets and caſt out divells; others who have abode the heat of the day in Gods vineyard, yet for lacke of ſelf-deniall to loſe all; and yet you have hated the Goſpel as a ſnake or a toade, becauſe it threatens your liberties, yea ſweare that yee will be curbed by none of theſe Preachers, your tongues are your owne, and no Lord ſhall controll you: Tell me I pray you, what confuſion of thought ſhall ceaſe upon you in that day? you ſhall ſtand in the forlorne ranke of the battell, and ſhall be as ſtubble for the fire irreſiſtable! you ſhall have the convincement within yee of a thouſand witneſſes, and yeeld to damnation, as ſpeechleſſe, and hugge the divells, and ſay to hell thou art my portion, and to the damned you are our companions: As *Iob* ſpeakes of the wicked, who rejoyced in the earth, the clouds of the valley are ſweet to us; ſo I ſay to theſe, That which ye have ſought ſhall bee your reward; deſtruction ſhall be your end, becauſe you ſought no better.

Matth. 7. Pſal. 12.

Job 21. 33.

Oh! let me adde one word: (Oh, that I could perſwade you!) perhaps you will fight againſt me with mine owne doctrine, and ſay, if the painfull loſe heaven, they can but loſe it who take no pains, and why then beſides, ſhould they loſe ſo many luſts and worldly pleaſures as they enjoy? I anſwer, this is as if a Traitor ſhould anſwer, why ſhould I be loyall, when as yet I may be hanged for cutting a purſe? Doe neither: what neceſſity is that ye ſhould periſh either way? ſhould one runne into a peſt-houſe, becauſe he may die of a burning ague, though he ſhould ſhunne the plague? Doe what lies in you both by phyſicke and diet to eſcape both: But firſt you muſt take heed of waſting your conſcience openly, ere you can get a good and ſound conſcience void of ſelfe and ſelf-love: There muſt be a beginning; and perhaps a prophane heart may ſooner become an humbled one then an hollow heart, which will ſee nothing amiſſe. He that breaks off thy prophaneſſe, may alſo grant thee ſincerity in thine endeavour: get but a ſeed of God into thee, and thou ſhalt ſhunne both the right hand and the left hand evills: I bid thee firſt to renounce the groſſer luſts, and then the ſmaller ſhall follow, and Gods yoke may prove ſweeter then both: Be not diſmaide, becauſe ſome have miſcarried in a higher degree; for better is he that crawles up the hill by little and little (though a creeple) then he who is neere the toppe, and tumbling downeward. So much for the firſt Branch.

Object.

Anſw.

2. Branch of Terror. Phariſees terrified. Matth. 6. Rom. 12. 1.

Secondly, this no leſſe chokepeare for all phariſees and formall hypocrites, whoſe Religion reſts in their duties: of theſe I have ſpoken in part before, the leſſe may ſerve here. Except your righteouſneſſe exceed the righteouſneſſe of ſuch, ye ſhall certainly periſh: Selfe will deſtroy many that goe beyond you, and their error muſt lye downe with them in the duſt when all is done, as *Iob* ſaith, Chap. 21. It muſt be a reaſonable, a ſpirituall ſacrifice of ſubjection to God, which he will accept: deale not with multiplication but ſubtraction, keep your ſheep & ſacrifices to your ſelves: The Lords are the Sheepe of a thouſand hills: he needs none of ſuch offerings: ſay with the Prophet, A body thou haſt given me, Lo heere I come: but come without thy Selfe and confidence therein, and caſt out old enmity of corruption, acknowledge and kiſſe the Sonne,

Pſal. 40.

for

for his ſea onely can ſweep away thy dunghill and dregs: away with thy morality and morall ſwaſions, bring them to the Spirit of Chriſt, and he that ſhall drown them all in his ſea; and this ſhall breed thee more peace in one day, then thine own courſe all the whole yeare, which (the longer thou tradeſt with it) the ſadder fruit it ſhall breed thee, and at laſt the worſt of all. So much for Terror.

2 Kings

Pſal. 2. ult.

The third uſe of the point, is inſtruction, and that in ſundry particulars. First, to teach us a true judgement of this enemy of our peace, and what cenſure to paſſe of her. Neither adultery, murther, oppreſſion, nor any ſuch luſt can defeate us of our laſt hopes, but this Self may and will: Reckon up thine enemies, (perhaps thou wilt ſay, thou haſt many, no man more then thou;) ſome that ſeeke thy ſhame, ſome thy goods, ſome thy life, and all theſe thou complaineſt of, no man need bid thee be revenged of them, or watch them a ſhrewd turne; but I tell thee, an enemy within thy boſome, counted thy darling and cloſe friend, one called Selfe, is a more deadly enemy, and can doe thee more hurt, then all of them together; hereafter raile not upon the evill world, thy cruell Landlord, thy falſe friend, bankerupts who have runne away with thy goods, or thy bad wife that ſtings thee with her tongue, thy bad children, ill neighbours, thy perſecutors; not one of theſe but may ſet thee a ſteppe forward to heaven, none can deprive thee of it: but Selfe can and will; world, divell and his inſtruments, could not hurt thee, were it not for this traitor, which ſets open the doore unto them to tempt, to defile thee: See *Naaman* here, in what a wildred caſe he is! except the Lord had made him ſee his enemy, and undoe all his croſſe ſelfe-willedneſſe, and waywardneſſe, and to ſtop to Gods way, yea and glad to ſcape ſo too; unto what a perplexity had he brought himſelfe after, beſides his pudder for the preſent: even ſo, know thou, that when thou haſt runne into thy long error, thou muſt come backe againe this way of ſelfe-deniall, or elſe the further thou goeſt, the worſe will thy caſe bee: Oh! it is a tugging crying ſinne, it wearies ten Preachers to denounce againſt it: Oh! to what a ſweete peace had the Lord brought many an hearer of the word had it not beene for this: Beloved, we have had ſome faithfull ſervants of Chriſt, both living and happily dead among us, who have confeſſed, that by this Selfe and her meanes, they have ſpent forty years ere they could come to beleeve, and do we look to make it a ſhort cut of forty daies? therefore mutter not at thine enemies, much leſſe at the Lord, but at thy ſelfe, and ſay, thy perdition is from thy ſelfe; God is enlarged, but Selfe hath hidebound thee and ſtraited thee in thine owne bowells; count that Sermon which hath taught thee this leſſon one of the beſt that ever thou heardeſt. There were many lepers in the daies of *Eliſha*, but he was ſent to none, ſave to *Naaman* the Syrian, and hee had beene ſent to him alſo in vaine, if Selfe might have borne ſway.

Verſe 3.
Inſtruction.
1. Branch. Selfe exceeds open evills in her deluſion and infection.

Hoſea 13. 9.

Luke 5.

A ſecond Branch of Inſtruction is, to ſtay that impatience of our ſpirits, which uſually falls from us, under the viſitations of God, either upon our whole man, or body, ſoul and conſcience, ſtate, poſterity or whatſoever. For why? ſhould we murmur againſt him that by wounding our ſide, ſhould let out an impoſtume which would elſe kill us, ſuch an one as no other meane would have cured, ſave this? doubtleſſe (as *Hezekia* ſaith)

2. Branch of Inſtruction. Be not offended with croſſes.

2 Kings

Esay 38.

faith) By this, man liveth. And *Iob* cap. 33. *Elihu* tells us, Hereby, even by the corrections which he hath ſealed (ſuch as he there mentioneth) conſumptions, fevers and diſeaſes which take away ſtomack and the like, the Lord hideth the pride of man, which is ſelfe: he brings to the pits brinke of the grave that he may keep the ſoule from hell, even the nethermoſt pit. Oh! when the bladder of Selfe, and Pride, and Preſumption, is prickt, and the bubbling froath, and windy puffing thereof, is let out, a man comes to ſee himſelfe as hee is, a forlorne creature; then his duties, affections, hopes, ſorrowes, deſires and performances vaniſh: no man can ſo baſely thinke of him, as he conceives of himſelfe, then hee is vile, & duſt and aſhes in his own eyes! Who is more free from all arrogating to himſelfe and his owne righteouſneſſe, then one that lies all pale, and conſumed with paine and ſickneſſe? When we doe meet with one, (except ſome deſperate blinde Phariſee) who in his extremity dare truſt to himſelfe? where is then his vain-glory, his boaſting of devotions, faſts, prayers, and alms? Alas! the image of them is deſpiſed, the pride of life is crack't, and the great ſtomacke is broken: and then his high thoughts, which exalted themſelves againſt Chriſt, and an humble heart, quaile and come downe. Then if an interpreter come, one of a thouſand, to declare his righteouſneſſe, how welcome is hee? When the heart is empty of Selfe, then doth the Lord commonly fill it with good things; and when it deſpaireth of ſelfe-hope, then the Lord ſaith: Deliver him, I have received a ranſome.

Croſſes are great meanes to let out Selfe out of the Soule.

Hence it is that *Iob*, cap. 10.12. ſaith: Thy viſitations (O Lord) have preſerved my ſpirit. And the truth is, it is well in theſe dead times, if any thing will doe it! As *Paul* Phil. 3. ſaith, If by any meanes I may attain it. The word (without ſome afflictions upon mens ſpirits, or name, bodies or poſterity, and that in ſome ſtinging kinde) pierces not; the ſpirit is ſtraitned. Sometims after long ſtruglings and wraſtlings of men with this Selfe, hoping to picke ſomewhat out of their owne ſtrength, they are tired and wearied in their way, and their former feares come upon them a-freſh, ſo that they can finde no reſt in their bones: Then they begin to conſider ſeriouſly of it, and conclude, There is a pad in the ſtraw: ſtill they croſſe the worke of God in one kinde, as faſt as they further it another: Surely they reſolve an heart of hollowneſſe, ſloath, unſoundneſſe and loathneſſe to renounce the creature, or their ſtoutneſſe, and ſullen heart, or the warmth of their owne feathers, their zealous affections. Theſe or the like oppoſe the nakedneſſe and ſimplicity of the promiſe, and keep the conſcience in ſnares and defilements, and they cry out, Miſerable men! who ſhall deliver us? And ſometimes by other affronts, the Lord is faine to ſharpen the point of his convincing ordinance, that the Soule may think the Lord is in ſad earneſt, when ſhe findes him to hunt her out in every corner, and give her no reſt till ſhe can be content to be ſaved any way, ſo ſhe may be ſaved: A very Papiſt in his ſtraits will diſclaime himſelfe, and ſay, It is ſafeſt for the avoyding of vain-glory, to cleave onely to mercie, and ſhall we that profeſſe none but Chriſt, come ſhort of them?

Job. 7.18.

To conclude then, as we read Heb. 12. My ſon, refuſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, nor grudge at his viſitations, as *Iob* once murmured. Why doſt thou viſit him every morning, and try him every moment? Why

doſt thou ſet mee as a marke againſt thee? But in the iſſue of that great trouble, he was of another mind, ſaying, cap. 9. 31. My very cloathes defile me: And cap. 42. 4. Now have I ſeene thee; therefore I abhorre my ſelfe. Let us doe likewiſe, and abhorre our owne murmurings at our croſſes: for although they are irkſome to the fleſh, yet they are wholeſome for the ſpirit; as we ſay of the body, that when the ſpleen is ſmalleſt, that is beſt: So, the body of grace is at beſt, when that Spirit in us which luſteth to envie, to ſelfe-love and carnall ends, is brought loweſt. Rejoyce therefore, and attend cloſely to this worke of Gods viſitation. Say as once one anſwered to him that diſcouraged him from *New Englands* voyage, by the wants and affronts which hee ſhould meet with there, and in his journey, as lacke of diet, good lodging, and the like: Oh (ſaith he) what know I, but by this abaſement, the Lord will crucifie me to this world, and the contents of it, marriage, pleaſures, travelling up and down, belly, gain, & the like? What ſhall I loſe by this bargain? *David* in his heavie affliction of ſpirit, Pſal. 51. could ſay, My ſinne is ever before me! yea, the ſinne of his Nature, and that Selfe, the ſeed of all evill, was then terrible: whereas before in his jollity, neither murther nor adultery was ſenſible. Looke up to God, and beſeech him, that in this glaſſe of conſcience, affliction I meane, thou mayſt behold the thiefe that doth thee all the hurt; that Grace by little and little may drop in, and Selfe goe out, that thou mayſt partake his righteouſneſſe, who emptied himſelfe of all, mayſt learne obedience by ſufferings, and behold that venome which hath drunke up and waſted the ſpirit of ſelfe-deniall and faith, and marred all thy hearings, and uſe of meanes till this houre: onely this caveat I add, Let no man aſcribe more to croſſes then is their due. They cannot worke of themſelves, ſave in and by the Word: But where the ſeed lieth under the dry clod, this ſtorme may poſſibly moyſten and breake it, and cauſe the ſeed to root and grow up. So much for this uſe. There is yet another uſe of inſtruction remaining: But I have already been too long: I muſt referre it with the other uſes which follow, to the next Sermon. Here therefore an end for this time. Let us pray, &c.

2 Kings

Jam. 4. 4.

THE SIXTH LECTVRE CONtinued upon the eleventh Verſe; and ſo forth on to the verſe following.

VERSE XI.

VERS 11. *But Naaman was wroth, and ſaid; Behold, I thought thus with my ſelfe: Surely, he will come forth, and ſtand, and call upon the Lord his God, and ſtrike his hand upon the place, and recover the Leper.*

VERSE 12. *Are not Abana and Pharfar, rivers of Damaſcus, better then all the waters of Iſrael? may I not waſh in them and be cleane? So he went away in a rage, &c.*

2 Kings

3. Branch of Inſtruction.

Staggering & unproficiencie of Chriſtians in the fruit of Selfe.

WEE laboured as wee could (beloved) to come towards an end of this maine point of Selfe in the laſt exerciſe; but were faine to breake off in the uſe of inſtruction. Therefore no further to trouble you, we come to the third and laſt branch of it. And that is to teach us what the reaſon is of ſo much irreſolution and ſtaggering in the ſpirits of many Profeſſors: why their faces are all ſo pale, & their hands are upon their loyns and ſides, as a womans whoſe paines are upon her, the fruit being come to the birth, but no ſtrength to bring forth? Where almoſt are there any other now-a-dayes to bee found? (except wee meane ſuch as never came to feele themſelves in a ſtreit at all:) ſure it is, their number is great, who (although in meaſure they affect the beſt things, and to ſet ſuch a price upon them, as that they are loath to goe without them at laſt: yet) ſtill profeſſe they can attaine ſmall ſetledneſſe, and reſt upon the promiſe with perſwaſion & comfort. Surely the reaſon is, becauſe (although as they conceive) that deſire which is in them toward God, comes from the Word which hath convinced them of their need; yet either they are ignorant of that which is able to ſettle them, viz. the freedome of the promiſe of forgivenes comming from the heart

heart of a reconciled God in his Sonne: or elſe will take no paines to digeſt and rivet it in their owne hearts; but chuſe to wanze away in their owne inconſtancie, being glad when they feele any affections ſtirring in them; but when they are cold and dead in their ſpirits againe, then their hopes turne to feares, and leave them ſo conceited, as if there were no way left for them to recover any ſetling or confidence. This policie of Satan to hold hearers upon this rolling ſtone of their owne bottomes, is no other, ſave that he blind-folds them with this Selfe and ſelfe-love. For why? ſo long as they were meerly carnall, and led by prophane Selfe, they confeſſe, God might juſtly caſt them off. But when once they finde their mindes and hearts to be truely bent, and ſet heaven-ward then they conceive themſelves as other manner perſons, and thinke that no man can blame them if they looke for ſome fruit of their labour, and wonderfull difficult it is to draw them from a carnall ſavour, even in the moſt ſpirituall things of God. Wherefore (ſay they) have we zeale and feelings, and hopes by our hearing the promiſe, ſave that wee ſhould aſcribe ſomewhat to them, and thinke our ſelves in better caſe then when we wanted them? And whence are they, ſave from the word and the glad tidings of the Goſpel? To whom I anſwer, I grant all to be true which you have ſaid: but what then? Is there no difference (thinke you) betweene the newes of ſalvation offered to a needing ſoule, rejoycing to heare that one lying in the dungeon may come out and reſting in ſome hope that it may be his owne portion, and betweene one who is actually drawne out of it, by applying thoſe cords to himſelfe, which God hath laid before him, I meane by beleeving the promiſe to be his owne? Are there no degrees of the worke of the Goſpel, ſave only to fall in love with it, becauſe it pleaſes us? Put caſe the Lord is content at firſt to draw us with the cords of a man, that is by an object which is welcome to nature, while we are uncapable of further things; ſhall this ſatisfie the ſoule, and make it by and by to thinke it ſelfe in good caſe?

Is there not a condition of the offer, as well as ſome preparations wrought by the offer? or ſhall ſome pangs of hope, jealouſie, ſorrow, loathneſſe to forgoe the promiſe, be ſet by as much as the promiſe it ſelf beleeved? No ſurely, for ſo the Maide ſhould bee preferred before the Miſtreſſe, and thoſe paſſions of the ſoule which God uſeth for the pulling of her cloſer to himſelf, in the embracing the offer, ſhall be equalled with faith it ſelfe, which were moſt abſurd: For why? faith is a worke iſſuing from the digeſtive power of the Spirit, ſo urging the faithfull meaning of God, reconciled to a ſinfull wretch in Chriſt, that he is willing to put away all enmity, and become a father to pardon her and ſet her at liberty: whereupon the ſoule ſo faſtens, that finding ſuch properties in her ſelfe, as belong to ſuch an one; ſhee with holy and humble boldneſſe, takes them to her ſelfe as her owne portion never to be taken from her. To apply the anſwer, the cauſe of ſuch ſtaggering is ſelf-love. That which you feele to agree with your ſelves, and to come eaſily, pleaſeth you too well, and cauſeth you to dwell upon it too long, and to withhold you from better things. The remedy of your diſeaſe muſt bee, to aſcribe no more to your ſelves, but to the glory of grace, to abaſe ſelfe, and

2 Kings

and to exalt mercy, to renounce all ſelfe-reflex from duties and endeavors of your owne, becauſe they cannot ſhed any meritorious bloud to ſave you, and to claſpe to that promiſe which is eſtabliſhed upon a ſatisfaction to juſtice; which though it be out of your ſelves, yet is (after a ſort) made your owne by him that promiſeth; becauſe faith is his gift, and he hath covenanted to give it you for that end and purpoſe. What skils it how little grace you feele within, whenas he who offereth you mercy, onely ſeeke ſuch as want it, that he may have the glory? Or what ſhall it boote you to thinke you have leſſe ſinne then others, when as he who calls you to forgiveneſſe, cares not how great it be, ſo it hinder not your beleeving in him, who ſeekes the ſuperabounding of grace where ſinne hath abounded? Accept then ſuch grace offered, as thoſe in whom nothing dwelleth toward any grace; and as if yee had ſtept no one ſtep toward it, more then the vileſt publican and ſinner have done.

Read this wiſely.

Grace beſt accepted by ſuch as of themſelves are emptieſt of it.

Be content to gird your ſelves and ſerve grace, and let not grace attend you, as if you had wrong if it be not laid in your laps, but come under the banner and authority of it, the ends and honour of it. It is ſomething that grace runnes in your ſtreame, but your ſtaggerings ſhall never ceaſe, till your ſtreame be dried up and turned to runne meerly in Gods ſtreame, to be carried, both whither, how ſoone, how and how farre it ſhall pleaſe him: Uſe all meanes, walke ſo in the way, as making uſe of all incouragements, but ſtill looke forward to the price of the high calling of God: boaſt not your ſelves, as if you had put off your harneſſe: But rather thinke thus, if it be ſo joyfull a meſſage to heare of a pardon, how much better were it, to ſue it out, and apply it to my ſelfe? and how wofully ſhould it ſting me, if any things ſhould come betweene cup and lip, to defeat me of it? Remember, that all preparations of grace ſerve onely to teſtifie to the ſoule, that the Lord hath beene at worke, not that it ſhould reſt in a taſte of abſent, but preſſe on with unweariedneſſe, to obtaine the fulneſſe of a preſent and enjoyed happineſſe, and betruſt it ſelfe wholly to his workemanſhip, who would never have begunne, if it had not beene in his power and will to finiſh. Stand therefore at his curteſie wholly, as diſabled in thy ſelfe to cooperate with him, much leſſe to have him at the bent of thy bow: binde Selfe to the altar with cordes, and turne thy active medling ſpirit, into a meere paſſive and waiting ſpirit upon the worke of God; not as a ſlave, nor as a loyterer, but as a ſelf-denyer, and one whoſe ſtrength is to ſit ſtill, and behold the ſalvation of God. Oh (beloved!) that I could ſo follow this councell of mine with effectuall prayer to the Lord, that through mercy it might become a mean to put to an happy end thoſe endleſſe & innumerable complaints of ſtaggering conſciences, & to ſettle them in ſome tolerable meaſure, with comfort and quietneſſe: And ſo much may alſo ſerve for this third and laſt Branch of inſtruction.

Vſe 4. Examination.

The fourth uſe of this point, may be examination of your ſelves concerning this ſecret ſinne of Selfe. I ſay not the being of it (for hee that would be rid of it, muſt goe out of the world) but the raigning and defiling and deceiving power of it, to keepe the ſoule from Chriſt: I need not be large in this: I have prevented my ſelfe already in all which I have

ſaid

ſaid before, to deſcribe this theefe by his markes: But what ſhall it profit you (brethren) to ſay, they are laid down in the opening of the doctrine, if ye let them lie there & apply none of them to your ſelves to find out your owne let? What ſhall it availe, that I have told you what groſſe Selfe is, and what this ſecret and wyredrawne Selfe is? To have ſhewed you many inſtances of it? The ſteppes and degrees of it? The carriage of it, both in the ground, the proceeding and the ſcope of it? The reaſons of it, both from the curſed nature of Selfe, the curſe of God, and Satans advantage? What good will it doe you to heare the danger of it deſcribed, by the naturalneſſe, ſubtilty, cloſeneſſe, violence of it? If none of all theſe will ſtirre ye up to cry out and aske, Am I the man O Lord? or with *Rebecca* feeling her twins to ſtirre within her, to goe to God for counſell? Alas brethren! To this end all ſerves elſe, all is as water running over in a full veſſell; ſome of yee perhaps will ſay, there is ſo much ſaid of this, that it fills your head, ſo that ye know not where to beginne? I anſwer, If it be ſo much, it may make ſome amends for the little or nothing which moſt men will ſpeake of it (and oh! that it might occaſion others to ſpeake more:) But to anſwer you, I ſay, take any one of theſe, and trie your ſelves by it; eſpecially cull out ſuch inſtances and markes as you thinke ſort beſt with your condition: let not plenty make you barren.

Who knoweth what is in the ſpirit of man ſave the Lord and it ſelfe? Or rather the Lord ſearching the heart by his owne Spirit, and teaching it to dive into the depth and ſecrets of ſinne? Who can judge whether it be groſſe Selfe or privy and ſubtill Selfe which peſters the ſoule, and diſables the promiſe? Who knowes whether eaſe or pride, feare or preſumption, conceit or error and ignorance hinder moſt? Try therefore thy ſelfe; knoweſt thou not that Selfe muſt ſtoope, if Chriſt enter: doe not thinke that becauſe here thou maieſt finde ſome markes of this elſe, therefore by and by thou haſt ſnatcht him; no, no, thouſands who know their diſeaſes, carry them under their privy garments as running ſores, till they deſtroy them; eſpecially remember, if Selfe bee ſo deepe an evill, ſo naturall a twinne, eating, laughing, and living in thy boſome with ſuch familiarity and bewitching; what, ſave the infinite wiſedome and power of God can worke the diſcovery or reſolvedneſſe of heart to caſt it out? Therefore, not to urge any thing already urged in ſpeciall, I doe onely in generall urge thee to make uſe of what hath beene ſaid already of this miſchiefe? Goe aſide, hide thy ſelfe in thy chamber, powre out thine heart to God, beſeech him to helpe thee with faithfulneſſe in the ſearch (elſe thou wilt end as thou beganſt) not to ſpare thy ſelf, but deſiring that the ſpears point which pierced Chriſt ſides, might let out the thoughts of thy heart in this kinde, or rather that the ſword of conviction may open the bowells of it and ſhed them to the ground; doe not this work when thou art otherwiſe occupied, and haſt other buſineſſe to doe, thou ſhalt finde this work enough alone, if not too much for thee, and doe it by frequent meditation, which is nothing elſe ſave making the truth of God thine owne; and that which thou canſt not finde thy ſelfe guilty of at one time or perhaps capable of, or able to lay to heart, to abhorre or to finde ſweetneſſe in the doing of; goe to it another, goe on where

Jerem. 17.

Selfe requireth good and deepe ſearching.

Eſay 26.

2 Kings

where thou leftſt (praying God thou maieſt not be new to beginne) and thou ſhalt finde, that at another time the ſecond or the third, thou ſhalt obtaine it: Thou ſhalt not repent thee of thy labour, in thus preventing and cutting ſhort that enemy, which would elſe have prevented and cut thee off from grace: only reſolve of this, that till the Lord hath grounded thee in the truth of this doctrine, a principle of practicall Catechiſme) it is impoſſible for thee to thrive in grace or uſe of meanes?

Further preſſing of the triall.

Say therefore thus to the Lord: Thou knoweſt the paines of thy ſervant in the uſe of meanes; thou knoweſt how poorly I have thriven under them, how little my faith, my comfort, my obedience is! how ready I am to deceive my ſelfe in that I ſeeme to have, to take up my reſt therein, that ſo I may not be moleſted any longer, but ſolace my ſelfe in the dregges of my eaſe and will, not to ſtirre one inch off my owne ground. Now Lord, if thou wilt be pleaſed to ſhew me, what hath done me all this hurt, I ſhould infinitely bleſſe thee! I am not ſo fooliſh (I thanke thee) as to trade for religion, and yet croſſe mine owne ends, in wilfull holding any evill within my boſome, which ſhould deprive mee of my hopes! I am willing to be informed and heare of the worſt; yea, to unbottome my ſelfe of my old rotten mixtures, and falſe grounds, for the bettering of mine eſtate, rather then to ſleep in death, and lie down with them in the duſt! Lord, therefore, now (before my heart bee hardened in cuſtome and ſecurity) bleſſe mine examination to the true ends which it ſerves for.

Object. Do all ſee this Selfe who are truly converted

Here I thought to have ended the uſe: but there comes one objection to my minde, which muſt be anſwered: For ſome will ſay, You make a great diſcourſe of this Self: What think you? Are there not many Chriſtians truly converted to God, who never diſcerned this diſeaſe, as you have deſcribed it, and yet are unfeigned and true converts and beleevers?

Anſw. 1. The grace of election working a greater meaſure of humiliation and tenderneſſe in ſome poore ſoules who want this knowledge, ſupplies this want ſweetly.

I anſwer you 2. or 3. wayes. Firſt, (hoping that their *Quere* proceeds not from ſelf-cavilling, but from ſimplicity) thus: Many poor ſoules have through mercy obtained from the Lord a great meaſure of brokenneſſe of heart, & humbleneſſe of ſpirit, more then the common ſort of Profeſſors either have or ſeek; and by this means (their helpes in both publique and private, being few, and their diſcouragements many) the Lord beholding them in the grace of his election, ſupplies all wants by his owne Spirit, keepes them hungry, abaſes them in the ſenſe of their many infirmities, puts in a ſpirit of perpetuall jealouſie over themſelves, and works them to a marveilous plainneſſe of heart to loath all falſhood as they can diſcerne it; and ſo perfects the work of faith in them ſecretly farre otherwiſe, then (in ſuch poore creatures might bee expected:) of theſe, I ſay, that although perhaps they heare not ſo much diſcourſe of the name and dangerous markes of Selfe, yet they feele the realneſſe of it within themſelves: and are better acquainted with it, then many who heare more of it. And theſe perſons if it ſhould pleaſe the Lord to bring that home in doctrine, uſe and admonition unto them, which I have ſpoken, would be formoſt in acknowledging and bleſſing God for ſuch truth, and make better uſe of it then the moſt doe.

Anſw. 2.

Secondly, I anſwer, Satan and corruption in theſe laſt daies, doe conſpire to withold many ſubtill, wiſe and carnall worldlings from embracing

cing the truth then ever: and as all Arts, ſo this art of Selfe, ſerving into the truths of God, (by the counterfeiting and deceiving of men) is grown rife and perfect; therefore needs the more exact and carefull countermining.

2 Kings

Satan more prevailes with this ſubtill world then ever. Ephe. 4. 14.

Anſw. 3.

Thirdly, the Spirit of God under conſtant meanes workes leaſurely: and therefore corruption is not caſt out all at once, but by long diſcipline and diſcovery of it, by the word: and in the multitude of helpes (ſuch as God be thanked) have beene enjoyed in ſundry places, much rankeneſſe hath growne (as a canker in a faire apple) in the ſpirits of many Profeſſors, as pride, ſelfe-conceit and prejudice; which the Lord hath juſtly puniſhed (as I noted in the reaſons) with a ſpirit of fulſomeneſſe and furfet, hardneſſe of heart, and difficulty of perſwaſion; ſo that in theſe daies, that old tenderneſſe and ſelfe-deniall which poſſeſſed the ſpirits of moſt Chriſtians, is rare to finde. Much more need therefore there is of this doctrine to be urged in theſe dayes; that ſuch as are the Lords, and yet held under this ſnare may be pulled out and ſaved, and thoſe who are not, may be left therein, becauſe they would not receive the truth in the naked love of it.

Much need therefore of urging this doctrine in theſe our daies.

Anſw. 4.

Laſtly, to end this uſe, this I adde, That although the Lord ſhould have called home many, without any former knowledge of Selfe, in any great meaſure: yet I doubt not, but when they do come to a better view of it, they will both mend their former bottomes, ſee cauſe to truſt God and glorifie his grace in Chriſt more then ever before; and alſo looke to themſelves in the courſe of their ſanctification the more watchfully, leſt this enemy ſhould hurt them more in that, then it did in the matter of their firſt converſion. However I ſee no cauſe, why the more cleare diſcovery of the will and way of God, ſhould ſeeme ſuperfluous; becauſe God had his number, when the light ſhined not ſo cleerly. And ſo much for anſwer to this queſtion. We may diſcover it by theſe marks. Firſt, by the true humbling of the ſoule. A proud heart will have her will to die for it: Becauſe pride hath high thoughts and muſt be ſatisfied, as *Rahel* with children, or elſe ſhee dies. And her daughters having loſt their children by *Herods* ſword, would not be ſatisfied, becauſe they were not. See an example in thoſe fugitives, *Ierem.* 43. They would go into Egypt, or elſe all is marred. But the humble, lowly heart, is glad to ſtoop to any conditions. The former is a dogged, ſtout, invincible heart. The other is a broken and yeelding one; it will indure any tearmes of ſelfe-deniall to abaſe it ſelfe. Will God have him poore, in meane account, ſuffer loſſe of goods, liberties for him? He is content, laies hand upon his mouth: not a word my ſoule, God will have it thus. Will God have *Paul* preach? He ſtoops to it. Will he have him not preach in Bythinia, but in Macedonia? He deſcants not. Will he have him goe from preaching to priſon, to baniſhment, to the ſword? He is content: If *Michol* mocke *David*, he will yet be more wiſe: If *Shemei* will curſe him, hee will not revenge: If he muſt loſe his Kingdome, let the Lord doe with him as he will.

The ſecond Triall, Judge thy ſelfe not in coole bloud, but when thou art put to it: Then Self will moſt recoile, and ſelfe-deniall will moſt appeare. Then is a ſouldier tried for courage, when his enemy is upon him,

2 Kings

him, as *Sampſon*. When temptation is abſent, a foole is wiſe, a froward one is patient, an unchaſte one is chaſte. But trie him and hee will act himſelfe, and ſhew his mettall: In a good and peaceable time, it is little to be good, but to be ſo where Satans throne is, is ſomewhat: in the midſt of an adulterous generation to ſhine, is ſome ſigne of ſelfe-deniall.

Thirdly, trie thy ſelfe-deniall, by thy forſaking of gainefull ſinnes. *Saul* will kill the refuſe of *Amalek*, but the King and the fat cattell and the beſt of jewells he will ſave. *David* will not kill *Saul*, to haſten a Kingdome. When two plead at the ſoules barre, gaine and conſcience, only then is thy ſelfe-deniall ſearched. Then looke to thy tacklings. When Selfe is not importunate, one Selfe may croſſe another. But if in importunity, the ſoule be rough and reſiſt, it is a ſigne of denying her ſelfe. Obſerve narrowly on whoſe ſide thou giveſt ſentence, when Chriſt and Luſt pleade together, as the two harlots. If the ſword of the word decide, all is well. If *Abraham* will renounce himſelfe in his dear affection to *Iſaac*, God may truſt him for ever.

Fourthly, Try thy ſelfe in point of free willingneſſe to ſearch out the expreſſe will of God in a caſe of doubt; without ſhuffling and crooking the rule of God to thine owne bent. Thus did *Balaam* coſen himſelfe with his conſulting with God, and ſpeaking againſt an houſe full of gold, but taking an handfull and going with the meſſengers; hee had light at a key hole to tell him he muſt not go, yet he quaſht it. *Iohanan* & his men prayed *Ieremy* to conſult with God: but ſtill hoping they ſhould have a grant, but being told he refuſed. There is no halting before the Creeple: The Lord knowes the meaning of the Spirit. There is a light in the minde, but the inſpiring, the ſtraitning of it is from God. Good wares will abide the light, Bad will not: And truth ſeekes no corners: But Selfe doth; and will ſay, I would not put my mony to uſe; but that it is againſt a Common-wealth to keepe it. I would bee ſtrict in a Sabbath, but that it is too Jewiſh: ſuch figleaves our nakedneſſe will ſow together. So much for this.

Againe, let this doctrine of Selfe, teach us wiſely to trie our ſanctification, and the truth of it, as well as our juſtification, and the effectualneſſe thereof. Selfe remaines in the beſt to defile their holieſt endeavours in part: But in hypocrites it defiles both perſons and actions wholly. So that it ſhould make us wary how farre we aſcribe to our ſanctification, except wee can prove our principle to be ſound. Selfe will deceive us with falſe colours of holineſſe, if we be not wary; for there bee many things which carry a ſtrong ſhew of it, and yet come from a falſe ground: All is not go'd that glifters: diſtinguiſh therefore our ſanctification, from all falſe principles which doe make ſemblance of it to deceive others and eſpecially our ſelves. An eaſie thing it is, (as I once read in a godly mans writings) for an erroneous heart, to goe forth in the ſtrength of falſe principles of Selfe, aſſiſted with education, Selfe in naturall parts, Selfe in luſts, Selfe in the power of Ordinances or Evangelicall light, Selfe cuſtomes with many ſuch like as theſe, Selfe feare and bondage examples. To give a little taſte of a few of theſe, that by the paw wee may judge of the Lion, and perceive how farre ſanctification lies above Selfe. Firſt take naturall Selfe to taske, both in her affections, abilities and

ard conſcience. Naturall affections may deceive thus, *Abraham* would needs have *Iſmael* live in Gods ſight out of a naturall affection, *Iſaac* would have *Eſau* enjoy the bleſſing againſt the promiſe. A woman hath a ſicke child which ſhee earneſtly deſires to live, and goes to God for it, though without faith, being a naturall woman. Chriſt is not the ſtrength of the prayer, but nature. See *Hoſ.* 7. 14. Affections are good, (as we ſee in *Hanna*) if under faith. But this error is thus diſcovered: when the object is ſpirituall, and the motive ſpirituall, the affection is ſound; but when the ſoule is not carried beyond a naturall object, (as when a woman having her child recovered, prayes no more) it is a ſigne of meere nature, See *Gen.* 20. 24. in the Shechemites. Againe, when naturall affections onely carry the ſoule, then meere ſoftneſſe of nature acts a man, but not tenderneſſe of heart: ſoftneſſe of nature will yeeld both wayes; it will pitty an offender being puniſht, as well as an innocent, it will be curteous to all ſorts alike, without reſpect of grace or deſert: why? Becauſe it is onely generall, nature proceeding alway one way. Softneſſe will yeeld in the Church to counſell, and out of the Church to ill company. But *Ioſias* his tenderneſſe yeelded but one way, that is to the Law of God; but was oppoſite to Idolls, and deſtroyed them. Mourning women hired at funeralls, or ſtageplayers weepe for good and bad. *Ieremy* weepes for *Ioſia*, the breath of their noſtrills, *Lam.* 3. and for the Church *Ierem.* 9. 1. So much for this.

The like I ſay of naturall abilities; They oft come in the roome of Chriſt and Grace: The lackey rides, and the Prince goes on foote. Naturall Abilities, are wit, expreſſions, memory, judiciouſneſſe and the like; in prayer, conference, repetitions of Sermons &c. But the error is diſcerned thus: Abilities doe not humble or change the ſoule, as true ſanctification doth, but puffes up the heart rather; Grace with giftes, abaſes the ſoule. See for this *Acts* 3. 12. *Revel.* 9. 10. 21. Faith the nearer it comes to God, the humbler it makes a man; it is an emptying grace of Selfe. Againe, parts will not keepe a man from ſinne as grace will. Abilities will not reach to ſuffer for God, though they ſeeme to act for him, if ſuffering come, Selfe rages. But Grace goes forth in Gods ſtrength, *Pſal.* 84. 5. 6. They went through Baca, yet from ſtrength to ſtrength. Love is wanting to only-Abilities: Abilities only looke at themſelves, as their own excellency: but grace makes God her excellency: only a naturall man beholds the Miniſter in his parts, not his ſpiritualnes.

Pſal. 84.

2 Cor. 4. 7.

So I ſay touching naturall conſcience: *Rom.* 2 14. 15. The heathens by naturall conſcience, accuſed or excuſed themſelves. But this is eaſily diſcerned, becauſe ſuch a conſcience acts a man onely in a naturall way: As they of Liſtra thinking the Apoſtles to be Gods, brought their Bulls to ſacrifice to them: many a drunkard taxes himſelfe, but his taxing is weak and vaniſhes; but a ſpirituall conſcience is firme and overpowring: Again, a naturall conſcience can be but morall at moſt, as not to lie, ſwear; but a ſpirituall embraces ſupernaturally revealed things, as faith, regeneration. And put caſe ſuch a conſcience have ſome light of the word added to it, yet without grace by the word, corruption is not ſubdued, as it is in a man who lookes into the mirror of the word: See 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. So much for theſe three Branches of Nature.

The ſecond triall is of education: It is with many Chriſtians as with Empericks they have learned ſome receits from able Phyſitians, but want grounds of Art to miniſter phyſicke themſelves. So many have had good education with *Ioaſh* under *Iehoiada*, and act accordingly. But the diſcovery of theſe is, that they are ſoone weary of Gods worke (I ſay not onely in it, for ſo may a good man) but of it; becauſe their principle is outward: but the ſanctified ſoule being inwardly ſtirred from the Spirit, is unwearied. See *Eſay* 30. 31. They are carried in Gods armes. But the other walk as a creeple forced to goe by ſome externall mover: now forced motions cannot bee perpetuall, as the motion of legs ſtrengthened by ſinewes and joints. Againe, a man onely acted by education, hath two motions, like the orbes of heaven, moved by their owne circular motion, and yet retrograded by the *primum mobile*: But a ſanctified motion is uniforme in it ſelfe; if he be in a good family, hee moves onely according to the good meanes thereof, not according to his corrupt motion. And when the party is furtheſt off his Parents or Teachers, the falſely principled, are moſt ſluggiſh and at laſt faint utterly: not ſo hee who is acted by grace; read *Iudg*. 2.19. *Iudg*.14. 1. As the glaſſe which yeelds reflection, no longer then it is backed with ſteel. A ſtone will flie a while ſo long as the ſtrength of the arme abides in it, but no longer; becauſe it is acted contray to the principle. Examine thy ſelfe about this now; one day thou wilt elſe rue it: Beleeve not every ſhew. He whom Chriſt hath traind up, drinkes in his raine, his inſtruction, is carried as I may ſay upon his ſhoulders, is cared for by him, bleſſed and upheld by him, though his naturall parts be never ſo weake, feeble and poore, whereas the counterfeit is abhorred by God, let his gifts and trainings be never ſo eminent. So much for this ſecond.

Thirdly, again, a man may thinke himſelfe to go forth in the ſtrength of Grace, & yet be meerly acted by ſome luſt; as *Diogenes* comming into *Plato's* houſe, and ſeeing coſtly ſilk cuſhions, trode upon them; ſaying, I trample upon *Plato's* pride. But *Plato* told him, he did ſo witha double pride: ſo *Eſay* 58. thoſe faſters went to work in the ſtrength of their covetouſneſſe and luſts. But an holy heart will make a naturall object, ſpirituall to it ſelfe: as a man may do evill in the ſtrength of a good intent (for lack of knowledge) ſo much more may a man doe good in the ſtrength of a luſt. How many will reprove others in the ſtrength of carnall indignation, as the other Diſciples did thoſe two ſonnes of *Zebedee*? Or of a ſullen, froward, cenſorious humor? Luſt is contray to ſome luſt, grace only to all luſt: Some preached Chriſt out of envy, a good worke comming from a luſt, but the diſcovery is eaſie; for ſuch a man obeyes not, becauſe he is commanded, but for his will ſake. *Object*. But I doas I am commanded, therefore I am ſanctified. I anſwer if thou doſt ſimply ſo, it is well; elſe thou maieſt do a command, and yet uſe that as a colour to varniſh thy action, as a Apothecaries colour their phyſicke for a luſtre ſake, not to amend it. So a luſt may bee the principle, but yet a command may be a ſtalking horſe. So much for this third.

Pſal. 119.6.

Fourthly, a man may coſen himſelfe about his obedience, by the common power of the Goſpel, and the gifts which iſſue from thence, and yet come far ſhort of grace; as is manifeſt in *Iudas*, *Alexander*, *Hymenaus*, *Demas*

Demas and others. And this is the ſubtileſt deluſion of all the former. As the lower element of water may ſymbolize with the higher of Aire, in an inferior quality of moiſtneſſe, though not of heate: ſo may an hypocrite partake of the lower qualities of a beleever, but not of his grace. As the Maſter is, ſo is the ſcholar; if the Maſter can but read, the ſcholar can but read; but if hee be able to teach Grammer, then the ſcholar learnes that: So an ignorant man can read the booke of the creatures without, and the booke nature within; but an hypocrite can read the booke of the Goſpel, and yet may be farre from beleeving it. True it is, both naturall and divine gifts doe agree in ſome reſpects, as that both are infuſed, the one by nature, the other by grace: both leave ſome poſitive worke in the ſoule, but naturall gifts rather by ſubſtracting ſome evill: ſpirituall by adding ſome reall qualities: both give ſome liberty of working Godward; but the former give no freedome to the will in working, the latter doth; for whom the Sonne makes free, he is free indeed: *Object.* But by this it might ſeeme that the difference ſtands only in a degree? *Anſw.* True it is, there is a graduall difference between the good grounds, one brings forth thirty, another ſixty, a third an hundred fold: but the good and bad differ ſubſtantially: For meere common gifts of the Goſpel in hypocrites, firſt are inordinate; as *Iudas* ſeeing the box of ointment broken, thought of the poor, but inordinately; and *Sauls* ſaving the fat cattell of *Amalek*, was inordinate and irregular: So *Ananias* and *Saphira*, *Acts* 5. Luſt muſt live, where it is not mortified, if not under open prophanneſſe, then under boord. Secondly, an hypocrite may ſhunne a ſinfull luſt, by putting it aſide as when uncleanneſſe is juſtled aſide by ambition or covetouſneſſe; or an hypocrite may be for Chriſt in opinion, when the winde ſerves, but not when it turnes, whereas a good heart is ſet that way, as the needle toucht, ſtands to the Northpoint: or thirdly, hypocrites may doe much by their conviction of underſtanding: but a beleever workes by the divine habit of grace put into and dwelling in his ſoule: moreover, true grace and morall differ in this, that the morall makes onely a change of accidents, as the fire makes iron hot and burning, but changeth not the iron from his nature: but grace changeth the whole nature alſo: for example, it doth not onely make a man pray, and be zealous, but it turnes his worldly froward heart, into an heavenly & meek. Laſtly, know it by this, A true Chriſtian moves toward God with a moſt kindly and inward inſtinct of ſpirit, as the ſmoke moves upward and the ſtone downeward; an hypocrite moves by a forced motive of paſſion, feare or the like violence: life alway hath a naturalneſſe of moving, as the ey-lid alway moves to keepe out duſt; ſo grace hath her inſtinct: The Law of God is written in his heart with the penne of a Diamond; therefore as onely nature teacheth Bees to flie home from a farre: ſo Grace ſends the ſoule to God in her revolts, armes it againſt enemies, ſuccours it in troubles, inclines it to good: But not ſo in the other; whence comes that deadneſſe, variableneſſe, dulneſſe, wearines, and other diſorder of ſpirit, in all unregenerate ones: Beloved, theſe differences are weighty: lin not till you can truly trie your ſelves by them, that not Selfe but Sanctification is that true principle which workes in you. Do not as common folke in a crowd, who waite for the King, they think

2 Kings

each Officer and Courtier is the King, but hee that knowes the King by face, will not be decieved by his followers. I deny not but all theſe particulars are good for followers, ſo the King be chiefe. All the peeces of ſilver are good which make up the ſumme, but yet come ſhort of good pay. Chriſt is the life of the ſoule, the treaſury of it, the ſtrength of it: The Angells could not foil Satan ſave by the ſtrength of the Lamb. Leane your ſelves, roll your ſelves upon him, as the Spouſe in the *Cant.* upon her beloved; and ſo you ſhall not be gulled in your obedience by any falſe principle of Selfe. And ſo much bee ſaid touching this laſt Branch of this maine and principall doctrine of ſelfe: one of the chiefe points intended in this my booke. The Lord give a bleſſing to it for his names ſake.

Vſe 5. Exhortation to two ſorts.

The fifth and laſt uſe is Exhortation, and that in two reſpects: Firſt, to all ſuch as endeavour to bee converted to God: The latter to ſuch as are converted already. The former of theſe I chiefely aime at in the doctrine, (though the latter be a neceſſary conſequent upon the point, & of great importance.) Firſt then for the former of theſe; and that ſtanding of theſe two Branches: One is, that ſithence this Selfe threatens the loſſe of ſo many mens endeavours for grace, therefore let all (who would ſave this loſſe, and hold that which they have gotten,) adde this one duty to deny themſelves, and forfeit this Selfe, which elſe will make them to forfeit heaven: empty thy ſoule of it and turne it up ſide downe, as one would doe a diſh which he would make cleane within and without. If any will be my Diſciple (ſaith our Lord Jeſus) let him caſt the hardeſt before hand, (and not the eaſieſt) let him deny himſefe: That which our Saviour there ſpake of one kinde of Selfe, wealth and welfare, health and life; that (in another kinde) I ſay of this Selfe, privy and inward, deny and abandon it, if thou meane to be Chriſts Diſciple. Let the obtaining of the Lord Jeſus to forgiveneſſe of life, make thee willing to part with and ſell all, which might hinder the bargaine. Men ſell bargaines for great ſummes of mony; the Lord ſells for no mony or price: Silver anſwers all things in common markets; but here it availes nothing: emptineſſe of Selfe, is that onely condition which the Lord lookes after: It is with this commodity as with the jewellers purchaſe of a pearle; It is worth all he hath, though he ſhould ſet all to ſaile which he could rappe and rend, his lands, leaſes, his monies, moveables, to the very cloathes off his backe, all too little to make a ſumme of ſufficient price. Now then marke: As it fares in the one with the jeweller, ſo it fares in the other with the ſoule. A foole that is but a common Goldſmith and wants deep skill, when hee meets with ſuch a choice pearle as cannot be bought without ſelling himſelfe out of all ſhop and plate and bables; ſhrugs at it, Oh! (ſaith he) though it is like, the pearle is ſomewhat worth, yet for me to put my ſelf out of ſtocke and cuſtome, and to ſell all my ware wherewith I was wont to make ſuch a faire ſhew to my chapmen, for a little thing which I may put in a box, and carry about me (without feeling it) not knowing what I ſhall make of it, or how to put it off to my minde, what a foole were I to doe it! But when he hath refuſed the offer, then comes it to a wiſe Merchant of jewells, one that hath skill indeed in ſuch a pearle; what doth he? Conſiders it apart, duly weighes with himſelfe

1. To ſuch as are yet to be converted.

Matth. 16. 25. Deniall of Selfe urged.

himſelfe what it is worth, even Lordſhips and Manors, and a whole Towne of land and wealth: it is but the denying of his preſent humor, and the conveniences of a preſent dwelling, fine roomes, and a pretty ſeat, and contents, and perhaps ſome old gold and jewels, which his Anceſtors left him for a remembrance. The queſtion is not (with him) what it will coſt, but what it is worth, and what the regret of the forſaken offer will be: money muſt bee had and paid preſently, the owner hath need of it, and will not forgoe ſuch a thing upon truſt. What followes upon this ſad demurre? Surely, rather then hee will reject the offer, he will ſell all to his ſhirt, but he will have it.

Here offers it ſelfe a fine Summer houſe, with Orchards and Gardens; there a delicate lot of ground, Medow or Paſture, and bids him, ſell not me. His brave walkes and ground next his dwelling, ſtep forth, ſaying; Sell not us, ſell thy out-lying peeces, ſuch as are no eye-ſore for thee to part with; but part not with that which as ſoone as thou ſteppeſt out of thy doore, thou goeſt into. What a narrowing and ſtraitning of thy ſelf were that? Then perhaps it comes to his minde, Oh! if I ſell off my livelihood, the world will count me a bankrupt, all will know what I ſell, but no body knowes what I have bought. And perhaps, ſome long kept Jewell will tempt him and ſay, How canſt thou part with me, which thou ſo oft joyeſt thy ſelfe in? So that here be lets on every ſide, and Selfe ſteppes in to marre all. But the skill of the Merchant over-powers all, hee tickles himſelfe with the thoughts of this Pearle, the leſſe it is known the more it is worth, and the greater is his vantage: and (all things conſidered) it is no great ſelfe-deniall to ſell all for ſo infinite a gaine, to loſe a preſent little for a future unknowne eſtate: therefore his eye will not ſpare, he will abondon all his worth, and gage his credit too, but hee will have it, and ſo he makes it his own. But having ſo done, will not take twice the worth of it again, Oh! do thou ſo (poor Soule) and proſper, ſell all, ſelfe and all: for though it be not worth in it ſelfe, the parings of thy nailes; yet becauſe opinion and errour, and a corrupt heart of ſelfe-love, doe ſet ſuch a price upon it, he Lord is content to take it as a price of the Lord Jeſus. (As *David* thought a pot of water upon ſuch tearmes as the hazard of three Princes lives, a meet offering for God:) ſo I ſay, Offer God ſelfe and all, it is ſcarce worth a pot of water of it ſelfe, but as it is the price of life, ſo it makes the ſelfe-deniall pretious to God. Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will hee give for life: but even this pretious life and all will a ſinfull ſoule give to ſave Selfe.

Each mans will more deare to him then the world.

Oh! what is every man ſave his minde? The minde of every man is the man: the ſpirit of the Miſer, the mind of the Drunkard, the conceit and opinion of a Papiſt, an Heretick or Schiſmaticke, the will of an Adulterer, (though all of them are as vile as dung) yet they are more pretious to them, then life it ſelfe! They will engage all, rather then their will and ſelfe. Even ſo fares it with corrupt ſelfe: The Lord offers to the ſoule, the Lord Jeſus, the fruit of his bloud and ſatisfaction, to pardon & ſave it: But upon what tearmes? Surely theſe, that the ſoule ſell all: Alas! what is all ſhe hath to ſell, worth? Shee hath nothing but bare walls within, and a dung-hill without, he that ſhould carry them away to

2 Kings

have them, ſhould take them at a deare rate: for what is old *Adams* wealth, but miſery and nakedneſſe? Oh! but there is a further thing in it, the ſoule thinkes her ſelfe rich, and full. This conceit muſt be firſt abhorred: the offer of Chriſt ſeemes to bee too hot and heavie: carnall wiſedome, reaſon, wit, eaſe, feare of loſing liberties and all other ſelfe reſiſts it: yea, ſhe ſo likes the Pearle, that ſhe will yeeld a devotion, a religion of duties, of coſtly ſervice to redeeme this price of Selfe: the halfe of the Kingdome ſhe can forgoe, and the other halfe ſhee will yeeld to Chriſt, and ſo ſave her ſtake: but to ſell himſelfe wholly to the skin, that Chriſt may be all in all, ground, money, gold, apparell, meat, drinke, and all, this is death. But even this God muſt have, or nothing. For why? This will lay grace, and the thanke of the ſoule under feet: which God cannot endure; Therefore this price the Lord will have, or nothing. Oh! give it him freely: One peece of Selfe will plead, how canſt thou ſpare thy darling? Another, to live at eaſe in an opinion of a ſafe eſtate to God: How canſt thou part with it, being thy Idoll? thy boſome delight? But if thou be this merchant royall, who is able to weigh the worth of the Pearl offered thee, peace of conſcience, & an happy death and happier life after; I adviſe thee put it not off for the ſake of a thouſand Selves, except thou will bring ſuch ſorrow upon thy ſelfe after, as all thy will cannot make recompence for, when the bargain is rejected. As the Mariners in *Ionah* would have rowed to land to have ſaved *Ionahs* & their own lives; but when no way would ſerve, they threw all into ſea, Wheat and other proviſion. And when nothing would do, they caſt *Ionah* himſelfe in: ſo let this laſt enemy, Selfe (as perverſe as *Ionah* in his owne device) be throwne over-boord, rather then the pretious ſoule ſhould bee in jeopardy.

Jonah 1.

Miniſters muſt be the formoſt in ſelf deniall. Joſu. 3.15

And let us Miniſters of God (like the Prieſts that firſt ſtepped into Jordan when it gave way into Canaan) bee the firſt that tread out this way to the people of God: for it is a way, which though it bee troden out plainly enough in the Scriptures, yet had need of lively practice to teach it before men will beleeve it. Theſe ſheep are much led by the eye, as well as the eare, by beholding the examples of their Shepheards, I meane, as well as by doctrine. Oh! when they heare us declaim againſt Selfe, and plead for ſelfe-deniall very ſtoutly with our tongues; they lay their eare to our practice, and hearing our Lute ſtrings to jarre, and ſeeing us wire-draw and caſt about every way, rather then we will part with any thing for peace of conſcience, or glory to God, not onely not our livings, but not our paſſions of wrath, envie, contention, vain-glory, not a braſſe farthing of our gaines, not a dramme of our pride, eaſe, idleneſſe, pompe and jollity, will and ſtomack, pleaſure or preferment for Chriſt and his Goſpel: they have the meaſure of our foot by and by, and reſolve to give us the hearing, till our tongues be torne; but till they ſee in us more ſelfe-deniall, they will never beleeve that wee ſpeake the truth for Gods cauſe, but onely as Parrets for faſhion ſake. Oh! the infinite prejudice which we our ſelves (brethren) by our cloſe cleaving to our ſelves, have done to this great cauſe of God. And this I can ſay, That ſuch of Gods Miniſters as have hazarded themſelves moſt for God, and purchaſing advantage for their Miniſtery, have obtained more

roome

roome in the conſciences of their hearts, then many of ſuch as have ſtood out to the uttermoſt, and would not abate any ace of their owne, for the winning of reverence to their doctrine. And yet, I would alſo exhort Miniſters to be as inſtant in the teaching of this truth, as in lively exemplifying it in their practice. And rare it is to ſee it otherwiſe: that thoſe who have found by experience, the life of this truth of ſelfe-deniall in themſelves; can keepe hot coales in their boſomes, but muſt needs utter themſelves to their people in a ſerious and painfull preaching of this doctrine.

The true Mort-maine.

There was a Statute we know of Mortmaine, which was faine to bee enacted ſince the times of ſuperſtition in this our Kingdome, to cut off the validity of ſuch gifts as were given to the Clergy for Popiſh ends. This Statute ſhould every good Miniſter enact in his owne ſoule (if ever he looke to doe good to others) firſt to cut off, and make Selfe a Mort-maine, a dead hand (for God doth ſo) if it ſhall dare to bring any gifts to God for Chriſt, and to count them as abſolute forfeits, as if a Popiſh fellow ſhould give moneyes and yearly gifts to a Prieſt to read Maſſe or Dirigies for the weale of his ſoule after his deceaſe. And ſo the people, let them bee exhorted alſo to exalt free grace, and meere Chriſt in the promiſe, not muttering that they find not that fruit of their ſelfe-deniall, that they expect: but counting it their chiefe work to wait at the poſts of grace (not as fooliſh pilgrimes doe, at the gate of the Popes entrance, knocking with a golden hammer, till he bring them his Jubilee bleſſing: but with patience attending the promiſe, till the Lord ſhall ſtirre the dead poole of their hearts, and quicken them with hope, confeſſing that it is mercy they may live and breathe in Gods aire, much more by the aire of a promiſe: (although not yet ſo eſtabliſhed in their hearts as they could deſire; yet ſufficient to keep them from grudging, to make them lay their hand upon their mouth, and to bee dumb, till the Lord bring healing in his wings, and put an end to their waiting. But as for eſteeming themſelves for their common gifts of knowledge or zeale, to be ever the neerer to God (for which thouſands are in hell) abhorring it, and chuſing to be the pooreſt doore-keeper in Gods houſe, then the higheſt Phariſees in the Church, who need no righteouſneſſe of another, becauſe they boaſt of their owne.

Malac. 3.

Therfore in all matters of God deny thy ſelf, & cleave to God. God is the firſt cauſe, and therefore the true end of our being, actions, ſervice. All Rivers runne into the Sea. For us to make our ſelves our owne ends, were to make our ſelves God, independent, and to make God an Idoll. To deny our ſelves is to diſtinguiſh our ſelves from the ungodly, who make themſelves and the creature their happineſſe. Wee looke to better our ſelves by our ſelfe-love, but indeed we deſtroy our ſelves: Selfe is our diſeaſe: ſelfe-deniall is our cure. Whether is it better for us to yeeld to? but we infinitely better our ſelves by denying our ſelves, even an hundred fold as Chriſt tells us. *Object.* But who ever hated his owne fleſh? Doth not God himſelfe perſwade us by ſelfe-loving arguments? As by profit, pleaſure, peace? I anſwer, yes, Selfe is a plant of Gods planting in our nature. But it is one thing to deſtroy an horſes good mettall, another to rectifie and ſubdue it; ſo it is one thing to deſtroy

Selfe,

2 Kings

Selfe, and affections (with Stoicks) another to regulate and direct them: Love thy ſelfe and ſpare not; ſo the Lord by his word may order thee in it, and take off thine exorbitant Selfe, as in the love of thy wife, ſeeking of learning, wealth, honour, favour, &c.

For the better perſwading of thee hereto take ſome motives and ſome meanes. Firſt, for motives. Till Selfe be denied, thou doſt in vaine enterpriſe to be religious: thou oppoſeſt a deſire of thine owne againſt an whole body of death; for Selfe is overſpread in all the lims and faculties of thy body and ſoule, as the forme is over the matter, and the Call over the inwards. Thou wilt be tried with ſelfe-reſiſtance, except the principle be firſt removed: Fleſh will ſo dog thee with her askings, that thou wilt be weary with refuſings. Till the ſoule be thus prepared, there can be nothing done: The firſt husband muſt be dead, ere thou canſt marry a new; at leaſt in the rectified intention and preparation of thy ſoule. The fleſh of the Virgin had beene a clogge to the ſecond perſon, except firſt ſeparated and purified by the holy Ghoſt. Elſe *Demas* might have clave to *Paul* as well as *Silas*; the ten ſpies to God as well as *Caleb* and *Ioſue*. But they were of two ſpirits. No agreement betweene two croſſe principles.

Secondly, God will never ſtoope to thee, his will is not to be bowed to thine, nor ever will while the world ſtandeth. For his will is the rule, thine the ſtring out of tune: What ſhould order a crooked thing, but a ſtreight? Neither can they both ſtand together: take whether you will, both you cannot have; you cannot have your will and ſwinge in your contents of world, luſt and liberties, and Chriſt too; no man can ſerve two Maſters, nor drive two ſuch trades at once, as a Fullers and a Colliers; the one ſullyes as faſt as the other whitens: nay, of the two, there is more to be made of following Selfe alone without Chriſt, then Selfe and Chriſt: by the former a man may at leaſt get himſelfe a worldly happineſſe, though he loſe heaven after. But by the latter, a man makes him wretched and diſtracted, ſo that he can neither enjoy the one, nor the other. Skin for skin and all that a man hath he will give for his life. The heart of a Chriſtian is ſingle in reſpect of his object, onely God and his favour no mixtures with it. Either deny nature in her inordinateneſſe or elſe give God over, for both cannot conſent in one degree of eminency; who cares for a wavering minded man, either to make him our chapman or friend or husband? For ſtill hee ſeekes not us, but himſelfe: Let no ſweet morſell be kept in our palate, to cauſe God to be out of relliſh with us. Better key-cold, then lukewarme.

Thirdly, it is equall that Chriſt and God be chiefe, becauſe they have bought us with a price, to bee theirs. Wee ſhould doe him great wrong who hath bought a Captive, if hee ſhould doe his owne worke. God hath not onely bought our ſervice but our ſelves. Except then wee never made ſuch a bargaine with God, wee muſt bee for him, who hath ſo dearly bought us. To be ſure, God will bee revenged of us as well for not making that bargaine, as for not keeping it. 2 *Pet.* 2. Some hypocrites are ſaid to deny Chriſt who bought them. A ſervant is his Maſters mony.

Fourthly, The ſoule feeles a heaven in ſelfe-deniall. What inward

conten-

content (thinke we) had *Abraham* when he had denied *Iſaacs* life? And *Moſes* and *Paul* when they could preferre God and his Church, before their ſalvation; to ſuffer afflictions with *Iſrael*, rather then to be a Prince in *Pharaohs* Court. Contrariewiſe, what an hell carrieth that man in his ſoule, who for baſe ends, denies God and conſcience? Let but a man deny one baſe luſt of revenge, wrath, and what an heavenly heart doth he carry with him to prayer.

Fifthly, Think what an emptineſſe there is in thy ſelf, thine own aimes and bents of heart, and in thoſe creatures and objects which thou judgeſt ſo ſweet: Wells wanting water and cloulds without raine. As one ſaith of the Pagan Gods, why did men chuſe ſo many ſave that each one was emptineſſe? When the eie of Selfe falls downe from one cleere Sunne, it thinkes it ſees three or foure, but they are all but fancies. The fulleſt creature is but a brittle glaſſe full of water; give it but as a cracke and it is gone. If we were convinced hereof, who would ſeeke vanity? Who would deceive himſelfe in eating aſhes, *Eſay* 44. and hold a lie in his right hand? It is meere inconſiderateneſſe, and want of weighing things, as hee ſaith there of the Idolater.

Sixtly, Either be armed ſtrongly to deny thy ſelfe, or elſe thou art foiled. For Selfe is as the wife in the boſome. It is hard to deny a friend a neighbour, (eſpecially if importunate, as him in the Goſpel, who came by night for loaves) how much leſſe a wife? Nay Selfe is yet neerer unto us then a wife: It comes alway with a bribe, a gift in the hand, ſweetneſſe of luſt, is as butter in a Lordly diſh: This bribe unhappily proſpers whereſoever it goes; except thou deale harſhly with it, as hee with *Iehorams* meſſenger it will prevaile. Stoppe thine eares as the Adder. In vaine is the net laid for that which hath wing. Dally not with her, as *Eve* with the ſerpent, *Sampſon* with *Delila*. If ſhe fell in innocency, how wilt thou ſtand in corruption? Peremptory folke are beſt in a good cauſe, and ſhe is the moſt chaſte wife, who hath the moſt denying behaviour.

Seventhly, There is enough in God to make amends for denying Selfe. That which Selfe falſly promiſeth, God both juſtly and duly promiſeth and performeth. To joyne any thing with God is to joyne a candle to the Sunne, or water to the Ocean. And (as hath beene ſaid) it is the way to make us hated of God and men: of God for lacke of integrity, of men for lacke of wickedneſſe. In things confuſed no man knows his owne. To expect reward from two Maſters, is to loſe our labour from both. So much be ſaid for motives.

To adde ſome meanes of getting ſelfe-deniall. Firſt then, labour to make ſomewhat elſe thy ſelfe, beſide thy ſelfe; elſe thou wilt never deny thy ſelfe: For Selfe cannot oppoſe Selfe, in the particular of oppoſition, no more then Satan can Satan. If once grace come in place and ſtead of Selfe, then all old Selfe, life and the comforts of it, ſhall go for new Selfe; elſe God and all ſhall goe for houſe and land, favour of men and liberties, luſts and will of the fleſh. So *Paul* calleth grace himſelfe: It is not I, but ſinne in mee; *q. d.* a ſtranger, an excrement. No matter what become of fleſh, if ſpirit once bee Selfe. Get this ſound judgement, what deſerveth to bee Selfe, and all is well: the old houſe ſhall downe, that a new may bee ſet up.

Secondly,

2 Kings

Secondly, be armed with ſound reſolution againſt the ſtrong error of the world, which maintaines godlineſſe to be meere loſſe. True it is that perſecutions follow Chriſtianity; howbeit even with ſuch perſecutions & afflictions, a Chriſtian ſhall have an hundred fold. As God can fill the ſoul with bitterneſſe in abundance; ſo can he fill with joy and comfort, an heart which wants, 1 *Cor* 1. When my afflictions abounded, then did my conſolations abound alſo. As a man may be in Paradiſe accurſed, ſo in priſon an happy man. *Ruben* what got hee in defiling of *Bilha*? Surely ſhame, he loſt both birthright to *Ioſeph*, Kingdome to *Iuda*, and Prieſthood to *Levi*: Hee was ſtrength and excelleny, but loſt all. And what got *Salomon* by denying himſelfe in his petition? Both that he asked, and that which he asked not.

Mark. 10.

Thirdly, conſider what ever it be which thou ſeekeſt without God, cannot doe thee any good. When God bids honour, wealth, any creature do thee good it ſhall, elſe not: They are inſtruments, and workes only by the agent, as the ſaw by the hand of the mover. They comfort us onely by a borrowed comfort. And ſo on the other ſide, nothing can hurt, no not *Shemei*, except God bid him; and when the curſe is gone forth, yet it ſhall be both cauſeleſſe and fruitleſſe, except God ſend it. Thoſe that do ſo Idolize the creature, yet finde it oft, their ſnare; yea the favour of Princes, proves their ſnare, and ſo they are forced to ſay, If God had beene chiefe, this or that had not been.

Fourthly, ſtirre up ſundry graces of God in thy ſoule: Firſt, knowledge; ſecondly, faith: thirdly, the love of God. For the firſt, conſider God in his worth. We uſe to ſay, Let ſuch a friend ſpeed, he is worthy; only knowing of God and his gift will make him prized, and Selfe deſpiſed. See Pſal. 73. 20. They that know thee ſhall love thee. 1 Cor. 1. 12, 13. See the place. Secondly, faith: ſee that catalogue of ſelfe-denying Saints, who refuſed to enjoy pleaſures in *Pharaoh's* Court, endured the ſpoyling of goods, &c. How came they by this? By faith they did it: Faith Conquers Selfe by the ſame power whereby ſhee overcomes the world; for the world within is the chiefe world. See 1 Tim. 4. 10. Thirdly, love: When *Paul* was ſo diſſwaded from Suffering, hee anſwers, What doe you rending my heart thus? I am ready to goe and to ſuffer loſſe of all for Chriſt: all is dung and droſſe to him. The love of Chriſt compells us; the Greek word is, hemmes us in as in a pinfold, that we can goe no way out of it, 1 Cor. 13. Love is bountifull, ſhe ſeeks not her owne, but Chriſts: ſhe ſuffers all things, endures all things. And to theſe adde, Stirre up wiſedome, and be able to conclude, that in denying thy ſelfe, is true ſafety, peace, gaine: in the contrary is nothing but ſorrow, repentance: if not here, yet in a ſeaſon unwelcome. See Matth. 16. end: viz. when Chriſt ſhall come with his Angels. Selfe ſhall prove thy plague, thy bane, if thou yeeld to it, as *Amnon* to *Tamar*, there will be no end of yeelding.

2. Branch of Exhortation. Get the Spirit of grace.

The ſecond branch of exhortation is this, Labour to get that Spirit of grace which God hath annexed to his covenant and promiſe, that it may not bee naked and empty, but accompanied and mixed with efficacie and power in the hearts of the hearers. This Spirit oppoſeth Selfe in all the elect, and ſuffereth it not to make the word to goe without effect, and to

defeat

2 Kings

1 Cor. 2.

deſeat them of their hope. It is ſuch a ſpirit in the ſoul as taketh them off from their owne ſpirit of Selfe, preſents ſo really the good things which God hath given us, that it cauſes the ſoule willingly to relinquiſh all home contents, and (with *Caleb* Numb. 14.) to turne the greateſt yron charets, Anakims and difficulties of beleeving, into encouragements and perſwaſions. I might (ſave for envie) compare it with the ſpirit of *New England* (not that all who goe that voyage deny themſelves; for among many that doe, ſome ſeek themſelves) but I ſay, to the ſpirit of ſuch as goe thither. For as many of them are diſcontent with the conditions of *Old England*, thinking it a burthen to live here, where they cannot hire one acre of ground, but it muſt coſt them money; but there they imagine, they may bee rich the firſt day, and occupy as much ground as they pleaſe, and live contentfully. In a word, here they finde abundance of ſad affronts and diſcouragements, which there they hope to bee rid of. Now (having in their intentions) knockt off themſelves ſo reſolved from the *Old Englands*, their native ſoile, and apprehended ſtrongly the new, as their Paradiſe, who ſhould ſpeake one word unto them to praiſe the one, and diſgrace the other, but preſently their ſpirits riſe with indignation, and conceive ſo much the more content in the new, by how much they hear the old commended. Oh! they will make hiſtories of their beloved, which their heart is ſet upon! there is elbow-roome and liberty, no enemy to hurt, no feare of priſons, ſutes purſutes at Law, wrongs or diſcouragements, no difficulties to conflict withall, in compariſon of the good things which they looke for: The ſtrength of the object carries them captives, pulles downe all objections, and ſubdues them under the authority of their owne deſires, and the excellent things there to be had. As for Sea-faring by the eight or nine weeks together in danger, ill diet attendance, lodging and reſt, want of wife, children old kindred and acquaintance, pleaſures & paſtimes, tuſh all theſe, ſhall make for their good, and make their new Engliſh ſhore the more welcome to them; they hope God will weane them hereby from all the ſuperfluous liberties, ſenſualities and carnall affections; and as for the defects of the ſoile, or of mony, or other contents, they will waite, ſeeing that nothing can bee perfect at once; and when they are come thither, they will not returne to the *Old England* which they forſoke, upon any tearmes which can be offered them: Oh! brethren, let me ſpeake to you without offence, ſhall a poore, conjecturall, fading and earthly object, ſo poſſeſſe the ſoules of men, that it ſets them in an extaſie, and ſhall not the promiſe of God waſh and be cleane, be reconciled to God, prevaile much more, to raviſh us and ſet us beyond all Selfe and ſelfe-love? Yes ſurely, when Chriſt ſhall thruſt Selfe out of place and become Selfe and all within us, and doe that and infinitely more then that for us, really, which Selfe promiſeth us deceitfully.

Simil.

But here a queſtion may be asked, What are the workes of the Spirit of grace? And what meanes are there to compaſſe them? I anſwer, Theſe that follow, which I mention ſhortly, and ſo finiſh this firſt generall Exhortation.

Object.

Anſw. 1.

And leaſt any ſhould aske me what I meane by the Spirit of grace? I anſwer the ſame which *Zack.* Chap. 10. 12. meanes, to wit, the Spirit and effectuall

2 Kings

effectuall power of the Lord Jeſus his ſatisfaction and interceſſion, whereby the Miniſtery of the Goſpel is inabled to perſwade the hearts of the elect to beleeve and imbrace the promiſe of forgiveneſſe and life. This Spirit is contrary to that ſpirit of Selfe which reſiſteth grace: the one from heaven, pure, ſavory and divine; the other from earth, carnall, ſenſuall and divelliſh. The firſt marke of the Spirit of grace is, that it is againſt Self and that in ſundry reſpects. Firſt, Grace ſtrives to inlarge it ſelf to the uttermoſt of her graciouſneſſe: Selfe ſtrives to ſtrengthen her ſelfe by the plentiouſneſſe of Grace; waxes wanton through Grace, ſo content to enlarge Grace, that therewith ſhee will enhaunſe her ſelfe; and will get up by the ſtirrop of Grace into the ſeate of Chriſt and make her ſelfe checkmate with him: as an ill Steward or Bayliffe to a great Lord, will ſeeme to doe him great ſervice, and looke to his grounds and cattell; but ſo, as himſelfe may have a ſtocke of cattell going upon the ſame grounds, ſo that he ſeeks his owne and his Maſters advantage both under one; he cannot beteame to promote his Maſters with the loſſe of his owne. But the true ſight of Grace, throwes Selfe out of her owne poſſeſſion and ends: The fulneſſe of Grace empties the ſoule to the bottome. Aske thy ſelfe then; hath the view of this Grace and of the truth as it is in Jeſus, emptied thee of all thy gifts, duties and religious performances? Then it is a true Spirit and deſtroies Selfe. There is no true godly Spirit, but it is the more humble, lowly and vile in its owne eies by Grace. Selfe gathers falſe courage to her ſelfe by the Grace which is offered, growes conceited, confident and full of her ſelfe; ſhe thinks ſhe cannot want enough of it; whereas all runnes over and leaves her barren. The ſpirit of Grace, ſo ſhewes the fulneſſe of Grace, that it exhauſtes her owne fulneſſe wholly, as thoſe ſterven Egyptians beholding *Ioſephs* ſtore of corne, were more abaſed for their beggery; and the Queene of Sheba beholding the depth of *Salomons* wiſedome, became a foole, all her owne ſpirit of queſtioning and cavilling ſunke downe. If thy ſpirit crouch and creepe to Grace and be quite battered in her ſelfe, it is a good ſigne. As the Spirit of grace ariſes from glory to glory; ſo ſelfe falls from ſhame to ſhame, to ſet up Grace. what ſhall I ſay to thee, Oh thou Saviour of all fleſh! ſurely nothing! be confounded and ſay, who is a God like to our God!

It is nothing but the ſpirit of preſumption, which prides and pearks up it ſelfe; but the Spirit of grace quailes the heart, and cauſes it to fall low as *Naaman* after did, even to ſnatch and catch at Grace, as one ſterven for want of it. As *Peter Luke* 4. beholding Chriſts glory, cried out, depart from me a ſinfull man! There is a legall whining baſeneſſe and unworthineſſe, aiming at this, that ſhe might be worthier: But there is an holy ſenſe of unworthineſſe, when the ſavor of Chriſts fulneſſe, drinks up the Spirit and leaves it empty. As when a proud boy heares a good ſcholar talke, his conceit of himſelfe turnes to abaſement; Oh, how his combe is cut! what a fool and an idot he is in his own eies! If the Grace ye ſeek doth humble ye, and not puffe ye up, it is as it ſhould be; I profeſſe (brethren) it would make one tremble to thinke how little of this Spirit is ſtirring in the world; I ſee but few poore ones among us, by this plenty of the Goſpel; take heed the Lord let us not bloud of this pleuriſie.

What this Spirit of Grace is?

Markes of it. 1.

Jer. 14.8.

Mica. ult.

pleurisie? The truth is, we doe but fat people by this pasture, wee bring no leanneſſe into their ſoules: As if Chriſt ſerved for nothing, ſave to make men their owne Saviours in part, and give over his owne honour; it would doe ones heart good to behold ſome few poore ſoules, how humble their knowledge of Chriſt makes them; they ſtand as an empty bucket by the well ſide: but it would cut ones heart to ſee how many bold, big, & ſaucy ones there are inſtead of a few empty ones! Oh! pull pull downe your peacocks feathers! If Chriſt be a fountaine, be you a channell dried up! If he be a Magazine, be you bare walls! If he be ſo rich a dole, come you to it as orphans! bee fatherleſſe and motherleſſe, that you may find mercy! reſt not in thy law humiliation, to loſe ſome of thy jollity onely, but let fulneſſe of grace caſt out ſelfe and all to the bottome. Every one cries out, alas! What have I to be proud of? But humbleneſſe ſtands not in confeſſing there is no cauſe of it, but in caſting it out. So much for the firſt Branch. Hoſ. 13.3.4. Note.

A ſecond reſpect wherein Grace reſiſts Selfe, is this, ſhe ſubordinates all to Grace: I ſay, all Selfe and her branches, carnall Selfe, hypocriticall Selfe, mixt Selfe, all now are quaſht, and the ſoule dare ſeeke no other credit, reſpect, commodity, eaſe to her ſelfe, then the Spirit of Grace will allow her. Grace in a poore ſoule, is as the power of Reaſon is to the inferior faculties, when once the ſoule is infuſed into the Infant, this ſupreame one of Reaſon ſubordaines the other faculties of vegetation and ſenſe to her ſelfe; all come under her authority and name: Looke whatſoever Selfe hath formerly aimed at above Grace, the Spirit fetches it all under it ſelfe. As *Peters* trade of fiſhing, and nets were vile in his eies, when hee ſaw the glory of Chriſt upon mount Thabor. Even all Selfe and folly comes behinde the Spirit of Grace. Oh! what a bleſſed liberty is this, to bee rid of the bondage of Selfe! what cauſe of rejoycing! Oh (brethren!) to love the Lord Jeſus for himſelfe, and all other things for his ſake, what a checke is it to Selfe? Good brethren note it, and trie your ſelves by it: if thoſe contents which were unlawfull, be cut off wholly, and the lawfull ſeaſoned and ſweetned by Chriſt, if thoſe delights which formerly were either ſavored for themſelves or without Chriſt: now we cannot reliſh, but in and through Chriſt. it is ſome ſigne that Selfe is brought under the ſubjection of the Spirit of Grace. And to this may be added, (which differs not much in ſubſtance) that the truth as it is in Jeſus and the Spirit of Grace, is the ſupply and furniture of the ſoule in all the wants and difficulties of it, ſo that it need take no further thought, it takes off the ſoule from all thoſe proppes which ſhee formerly truſted unto, and makes a rich ſupply of them in Chriſt really. Excellent is that ſpeech which *Ioſeph* bid his brethren utter to *Iacob* when he ſent for him into Egypt: Take no thought (ſaith he) for your houſhold ſtuffe and implements which ye uſe; for lo, all the fulneſſe of the land of Egypt is before you: count all your furniture not worth the carrying, for ye ſhall find in Egypt ſuch ſtore of all neceſſaries, that you ſhall not repent you of the leaving of them behinde. Surely if the promiſe of *Ioſeph* were ſo well worth the truſting to, what is the promiſe of Chriſt worth? And if the ſtore of Canaan were ſo ſuperfluous in Egypt, what is the ſupply of Selfe worth to one that is in Chriſt? 2. Marke. Gen. 45.20.

2 Kings

If this were thought of beforehand, how lythe and cheerfull would the ſoule be in going to Zoar out of Sodome? How farre would ſhee be from looking backe with *Lots* wife, as loth to depart from her old treaſure? The heart called to Chriſt, hankers and hangs off, here catching up one rag of Selfe, there another, loath to goe naked, fearing leſt there ſhould not be enough for all uſes and turnes in Chriſt; but when ſhee heares, Take no thought for any of theſe, Chriſt ſhall afford all meet eaſe, credit, content and worldly conveniency: Oh it is well content to leave it for who ſo will: let them take it that know no Chriſt. As the lame man hearing Chriſt calling him, threw away his cloke and crutches, ſaying, If Chriſt will give me my limbs, I take no thought for theſe, either I ſhall need none, or have them better ſupplied from a fountaine.

Brethren, weigh this marke well. Selfe cannot digeſt it. All the whole ſea of Chriſt is no content to her, except ſhee can eike him out with ſomewhat of her owne: ſhe hangs in the aire without a bottome, like a ſtone, till it be upon her center. But Chriſt is a ſufficient ſtore to a poore ſoule in the vacuity of other things. Though there were no calfe in the ſtall or bullock in the flock, yet Chriſt were enough. Trie your ſelves: you may as eaſily judge by this marke, as what meate your ſtomack ſtands to. If onely you can bee ſatisfied with Chriſt, while your eaſe, credit, health and welfare laſt, then (upon point) Chriſt is not theſe, but theſe are Chriſt. When *Iacob* ſaw the charets, he had enough; if you cannot ſay ſo, when you behold the promiſe, all is not well: Onely an inſufficient Chriſt cauſeth ſuch patching. A good new garment needs no ſhreds to peece it; Chriſt is to a poore child of God (as *Elkana* told diſcontented *Hanna*) more then tenne ſonnes. Till there be enough felt and taſted in Chriſt, who will forgoe his other proppes? Who will flit out of his dwelling, to lie in the ſtreet? The true mother cried, let her have all the child, rather then divide it. So the ſoule that is guided aright, loathes to divide Chriſt; he had as leave have none. Beg of the Lord to reach you out the Lord Jeſus in his full ſupply of all wants, and ſeaſoning of all mercies, that your ſoule having this boote in beame, may be indifferent for other things, as knowing they ſhall either not bee needed, or elſe caſt in.

Heb. 2.

1 Sam. 1.

1 King. 3.

The third Marke. It ſubjects the ſoule to Chriſt, upon his owne tearmes and conditions.

The third branch of the Spirit of grace in oppoſing Selfe, is, the ſubduing and ſubjecting of the ſoule with equalneſſe and contentedneſſe of minde to all thoſe termes and conditions upon which grace may bee obtained; refuſing no difficulties, neither uſe of meanes, nor forſaking her old contents, but thinking grace a rich pennyworth, whatſoever ſhe coſt. There is a baſeneſſe and cloſeneſſe in Selfe, whereby ſhe cauſeth the ſoul to ſhrug at the conditions of Grace, as weariſome and coſtly: this humor the Spirit of Grace removes & cauſes ſuch a cheerfull willingnes in the ſoule to ſtoop to any tearms of Gods impoſing, that ſhe thinkes her ſelfe well, if ſhe may ſo ſpeed. When a man lies ſicke of a diſeaſe without danger of death, he will ſend his ſtate to the Phyſitian, and give him a ſlight fee, but he is loath to charge himſelfe deeply for the matter: but if ſickneſſe encreaſe, and danger of life appeare, then the deſire after health, and the fear of danger concurring, make him devoure all charges, then he will have the Phyſitian come to him, and give him any recompence,

pence, being glad of health upon any conditions. So it is here. Coy and queazie Selfe, that feeles no danger, and reaches at Grace as a good thing in generall, can beteame no great paines, nor deny her ſelfe any wonted liberty, nor ſubmit to any great abaſement of her ſelfe for the matter; if it come eaſily, ſhe is content. But if once the Spirit of Grace ſhew her the danger of forgoing it, of delaying to get it, of an indifferent, remiſſe heart, lazy, carnall, and willing to goe to heaven with all her will and liberties; if once ſhe preſent the neceſſity of it, and the true ſenſe of utter periſhing without it, lo then, the caſe is altered, then (as *Peter* on the ſuddaine would have Chriſt waſh him throughout) ſo ſhe growes reſolute to beare downe all ſelfe, lets, diſſwaſives, feares, loſſes, diſcredit; then (ſo ſhe may have Grace) ſhee will have it any way; let all goe ſhee cares not, ſo ſhe may enjoy that pretious thing ſhe loveth: ſhe tramples upon her pride, eaſe and all that hangeth on as a clog without, or as a let within, glad, if with the forfeit of all, ſhe can purchaſe it. Marke this (good brethren) let the Spirit of Grace prevaile a little, and it is ſtrange how it ſubdues that loathneſſe of Selfe to yeeld, the rebellion and fierceneſſe of the Spirit! Oh! it cauſes the Lion and Lambe to feed together, it tames the ſoule and carries it captive, bound hands and feete, content to abaſe it ſelfe to the loweſt and pooreſt tearmes, to be taught and directed in the way of God, by the moſt deſpiſed inſtruments, which before ſhe diſdained to learne of. Curioſity now, and choice of Preachers, and accepting of the Grace of our Lord Jeſus, in reſpect of perſons, is baſe and unſavoury. Now ſhee ſees Grace is onely in the hand of God to give or reſtraine, now it is a dainty commodity indeed, and beares prick and priſe in the ſoule; any thing will be given for it, if God will now ſell it her, let him but aske and have; and whatſoever before was in high eſteeme, ſhall now be vile, and as dung unto it! Oh! (beloved) trie your ſelves alſo by this marke, and if ye finde the leaſt dramme of this geaſon worke of the Spirit in you, dampe it not nor quench it, leſt Selfe returne and ſet ſuch a deepe price upon it, that perhaps yee will never recover it againe. If a ſpirit of frequent and unwearied hearing, travell, conference, meditation, queſtioning, conſulting with ſuch as can reſolve us, a ſpirit of wiſdome to devoure ſinfull baſhfulneſſe and modeſty, and coynes in revealing our doubts, be given unto us: if wee feele an heart in us loathing that lither, liſtleſſe, dead ſpirit which was wont to withdraw us, beware we loſe it not, nouriſh it, and although all the world ſhould mock us, and our own baſe ſpirit ſhould tell us we ſhall be noted for our labour, let us make never the leſſe of it, nor be diſcouraged.

John 10. 10.

Heb. 12. 1.

Fourthly, the Spirit of Grace reſiſts thoſe particular and perſonall pangs of Selfe & ſelf-love, which the ſoul eſpecially is diſtempered with: Selfe is a ſtock of many branches, even originall antipathy to Chriſt and Grace at every rate; but ſome appeare in one, ſome in another: as in the body ſome humors ſettle within the intralls, others breake out into ſores and ſwellings. So here: In ſome there appeares a baſe lither heart, in ſome a ſpirit of the world, luſting to rake and ſcrape, in others ſubtilty and hollowneſſe to colour over their owne corruption, in ſome a barren deadneſſe of heart, in others ſecret pride and reſting in their gifts, in ſome ſelfe-conceit of their owne way, in others revenge, pettiſhneſſe, froward-

4. Marke. Spirit of Grace reſiſts thoſe ſpeciall pangs of ſelfe, in every ſoule.

2 Cor. 10. 4.

2 Kings

In some stronger, in in some weaker.

neſſe. Some encline to the right hand of ſelfe-confidence and content in their owne hopes: others to the left hand of feare and ſlavery. Now the Spirit of Grace, is as fire, devouring that corruption which is next hand, and ſearching out the peculiar diſtemper of the Spirit which beares moſt ſway againſt Grace and Chriſt: It deſcants not about other mens lets and maladies, but lookes at her owne in ſpeciall, ſaying, I doubt not but others finde their owne home and boſome hindrances, let me ſee to mine owne, for other mens ſhall not hurt me. I feele a very ſtout heart loath to take a reproofe, bluſtering at any that ſhould taxe me! what? Do they know what I am, my parts! or thus, I feele a very froward ſpirit, God himſelfe muſt not croſſe and unſettle me, leſt I fly in his face! or thus, I feele a ſtiffe heart of Selfe, loath to doe good, to ſympathize the neceſſities of others, (ſo I may fare well my ſelfe) by viſiting, by adviſing, admoniſhing, inſtructing them. I ſay each one hath his peculiar ayles and humors, which take off the edge of grace in him, and all becauſe there is not that meekeneſſe, tenderneſſe and brokenneſſe of ſpirit, there wants the power of Chriſt to beare downe ſuch diſtempers: But the Spirit of Grace encounters every ſpeciall diſeaſe, diſcovers to every man his owne, abandons that ſpirit which reignes in an hypocrite, who can make a pretty ſhift, till his owne baſeneſſe be found out, but then he buſkells and takes on like a mad man. Not ſo here: For the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus is a Spirit of ſagacity and ſearch, never linning till it can follow her ſelfe by the ſent and footings, to her very den, and there ſtrives to drive her out of her hold by violence.

This matke cleared.

For why? It preſents to the ſoule the ſafety and happineſſe of ſelfe-diſcovery, and the infinite danger of the contrary; cauſeth it to delight in the convincing of her conſcience, and to be loath to foſter in herſelfe any ſuch michiefe, as might deſtroy her own hopes. She ſees how hypocrites doe exchange Selfe with Selfe, but purge it not out wholly; deſires to reſigne up her chiefe fort and freehold to the Spirit of Grace without tergiverſation or ſhifting. And ſo, ſhee cries out heartily to the Spirit of Grace; Lord how long ſhall this cloſe enemy of mine maintaine her ſelfe againſt thine authority, and crie maſteries with thy Spirit? Haſt thou not yet a further ſtrength to caſt downe this bulwarke? Oh! if thou ſhalt caſt out this defilement to the bottome, ſo, as I may feele a ſweetneſſe in thee to ſupply and equall it, how ſweet a mercy ſhall I count it?

Beloved, ſearch your ſelves by this. Can you ſay of all theſe dregs of Selfe, Oh, that I might bee rid of them at once! Oh, when ſhall that happy day come! When ſhall I feele the Spirit of Grace thus working to put all out of queſtion! that which is the bane of the falſe heart, is the chiefe joy of a ſound one! when ſhall I feele my ſoule as ſenſibly ſuſtained by the Word, as ever I have beene by Selfe? Oh! if now the houre were come, that all the unclean pleaſures I have taken in my own bottome and ſelfe-ends, were quaſht, how ſhould I rejoyce! And yet I know well what I muſt forgoe, even that which hath been my meat and drinke and paſtime: but I ſpeake adviſedly and in coole bloud, I ſhould be glad of it, and hazard all, and I know they ſhould be as droſſe to me! if thou canſt truly profeſſe this, thine eſtate is comfortable.

And

And hereto I may adde this, as a fifth marke, that the Spirit of Grace ſettles and compounds all thoſe objections and cavills whereby Selfe labours to rivet her ſelfe in the ſoule; ſhee paſſes ſentence againſt Selfe, and when Selfe hath ſpent her ſelfe in all ſhe can ſay to hold the ſoule in her chaines, yet the Spirit of Grace is ſtronger for Grace, then Selfe for corruption. Notwithſtanding all her eaſe, loathneſſe to part, advantage to the fleſh, difficulty of beleeving, pretences and colours, yet ſo it is, Grace will beare the ſway and perſwades the ſoule to caſt her out. She is as thoſe men of Juda, whoſe words were ſtronger for *David*, then the words of the men of Iſrael. So that let Selfe diſpute what ſhe can againſt mercy, yet mercy is that which at laſt the poore ſoule muſt betake her ſelfe to, ſooner or later; and better at firſt, while the heart is tender and willing to take paines, then at laſt, when ſhe is ſapped and ſoked in Selfe. Grace is the thing ſhe aimes at, and although ſhe have had many turnagaines and diſcouragements, yet till ſhe reſts there, and ſets downe her ſtafe upon the promiſe, ſhee ſhall have no reſt or peace in her ſpirit, and therefore, bearing downe all difficulties, cavills and pullbacks, ſhe reſolves upon Grace and the freedome of mercy: This cannot an hypocrite reach unto: for, either he is reſolved to be as he is, or elſe proceeds on in a continuall ſtaggering: If the former, then he is hardened, and will be as he is, if he be in an error, he will live and dye in it, he will not change his eſtate for any mans, hee deſires to be in no better caſe then he is. If the latter, then he is alway deviſing of one ſhift or other to delude his owne conſcience when it checks him for unſoundneſſe, making it his trade, to daube it with untempered morter. Contrary to both, the Spirit of Grace cauſes the ſoule to bee informed of her owne danger, to be content to heare of the hardeſt, to amend any errors which have miſled her, though with much paine, ſearing or lancing, medicines or plaſters, ſhe is willing to undergoe any hardſhip for a cure, and will refuſe nothing, ſo ſhe may be rid of an unſafe condition: and although ſhee knows this divell will not out without foming and raging and much oppoſition, yet ſhe doth as the husbandman doth, who knowes if hee ſhould obſerve winde and raine, he ſhould neither ſow nor reape: So the Spirit of Grace waites not while the coaſt bee cleare and all objections of Self be anſwered (for ſhe holds her own and will not be anſwered) but breakes through the hoaſt of all cavills, to come to the bare promiſe, and when ſhe cannot untie each knot by picking it, ſhee takes her ſword and cuts them in two at once, that the ſoule may be at liberty. And (as the Prophet ſpeakes of carrying the Ephah into the land of Shinar) ſo doth the Spirit of Grace carry this reſiſtance of Selfe farre away from the ſoule, whence it may never returne any more to peſter her in the maine point of reſolving to caſt her ſelfe nakedly upon Grace and Chriſt.

5. Marke. It anſwers all objections of Selfe.

2 Sam. 19 43.

Eccleſ. 11 4.

Zachar. 5. 11.

Sixtly, Grace oppoſes Selfe, by ſetting Selfe againſt Selfe, and thereby wearing her in her owne way, that ſhee may forſake it and take a better. Hence it comes to paſſe, that when the ſoule hath long traded with her owne affections, devotions and duties, ſatisfying her ſelfe with the warmth of her owne feathers, the Lord ſets another Selfe againſt them, that is, ſuffers ſome morall diſtempers to riſe up in them, as peeviſhneſſe, wandring after fond & frothy vanities, an inconſtancy of ſpirit to unſettle

6. Marke. It ſets Selfe againſt Selfe.

2 Kings

them, contenting themſelves with the creature, any ſhred of it, eating and drinking, padling in the world or about carnall objects which formerly they deſpiſed: and why theſe? Surely that they might be gaſtered by the worſe from the better, and being beaten from Self in both kindes, might reſolve to faſten upon that which might bottome them upon Chriſt. I have obſerved it in ſundry, even of tender and good affections, that through feare and weakneſſe could not bee perſwaded to caſt themſelves upon the onely free and unchangeable truth of the promiſe, there to ſettle and to reſt in Chriſts boſome without ſtrugglings or diſtempers of their owne baſe diſtruſt; therefore the Lord hath ſuffered them to be exceedingly diſguiſed and burdenſome to themſelves by the contrary qualities of ſloth, eaſe, weariſomeneſſe, deadneſſe, formality, wrath and other baſer evills. Their former love of the word hath turned to indifferency whether they heare or no; their painfull hearings, meditatings with ſome life and ſavor, praying with devout hearts and fervency, with like care and jealouſie in their other courſe, hath wanzed and waxed weariſome; and thoſe evills which I named, have come in their roome; and when they have felt theſe pricks in their fleſh to buffet them: Oh! how ſad and unſettled have they beene? As a bone out of joint, fit for nothing? Yea, how ſullen with God, quarrelling, as if they never had any good wrought in them, and ſometimes ready to give over all in a tech and mood: Why, (I pray you) doth the Lord leave ſuch painfull ſoules to ſuch diſguiſements? Hath hee delight to croſſe them, to breake the bruſed reed, or to quench the ſmoking flax? No doubtleſſe. Try your ſelves (good brethren) whether or no this hath beene your condition? And if it have, know that the Lord is juſt to deale thus with you (although ye have not perhaps provoked him by an ill conſcience, by running to evill or wilfull rejecting of the meanes) even becauſe you ſtill reſt upon your owne bottomes, and aſcribe to your duties and affections: he would pull ye off from theſe, and draw you to ſet your ſoules upon better objects.

Object. I know what objection you will make by and by: That you have alſo (as much as in you hath lyen) ſtrove againſt all reſting in any affections of your owne, laboured to deny your ſelves, and to ſettle upon the promiſe: But I demand, why then have you not obtained a bottome to reſt upon? You will ſecretly mutter and ſay, the Lord hath not beene pleaſed to let out any ſaving and effectuall goodneſſe out of his promiſe, to prevent you in your endeavours, and to ſweeten you with the comfort of his Grace, that ſo your labours might not be in vaine? Doth hee not let out ſuch ſweetneſſe as yee would? Where then is the fault? Could you lay the fault upon God? Or thinke you that the error lies within your owne boſome? What way hath God (I pray you) ſave the way of his promiſe, inſeperably attended by his Spirit, to let in and convey himſelfe into the ſoules of his poore ſervants? Surely if you have cloſed with his promiſe for the aſſiſtance of the Spirit, to convey his good things upon your ſoules; then may and ought you to waite his leaſure for the anſwering of your doubtfull hearts; and the Lord will not bee wanting to give you now and then ſuch handſells of mercy, as are meete to ſtay you, and to aſſure you of better meaſures afterward. But ſay the truth:

Anſw.

truth: is there not within you a ſecret loathneſſe to give up your owne bottome, hopes and hold, to the meere freedome of eternall mercy? Or have you not kept a falſe meaſure within you, that is, to mixe your ſelves with mercy, being loath to deny your ſelves, your feelings, zeale, labours and devotions? Have you caſt theſe out, and come under the power and authority of the Word? I feare there is ſuch a pad in the ſtraw; If there be not, it is ſome ſin againſt conſcience which hath waſted you, which muſt be abhorred: but if it be as I have ſaid, alas! poor ſoules, then wonder not that God hath croſſed you: for it is for good, even to faſten you to himſelfe, and above all meanes, to acquaint you with his owne power, who in the midſt of theſe diſtempers of yours can forgive you, can imbrace you with mercy, and finde in his heart to love you: (even then when perhaps you could bite your tongues becauſe you are ſo bad:) and this, if you can beleeve it, will carry meate in the mouth, when all your own mixtures muſt vaniſh. Try your ſelves by this marke, whether the Spirit of Grace have ſo wildred you in the beſt and moſt pleaſing waies of your own, till he have driven you into your chambers to hide your ſelves there under the ſecret of the Almighty, under that free, infinite, full covert of the promiſe, till the evill be overpaſt. Tell me (brethren) when you can feed and revive your ſpirits at this feaſt, and warme your ſelves at this fire, is it not high holy-day with you? Finde you not a difference betweene this and your owne ſparkes? Bee content then, reſigne up your ſoules to this worke, and ſay, the Lord hath done you no wrong to weane you from your owne breaſts, that you might ſuck at his promiſes.

Eſay 26.

Seventhly and laſtly, the Spirit of Grace oppoſeth Selfe in all her errors and ſubtilties. For the former, Selfe is a great blinder of the eyes and cauſes the ſoule to ſleep in a whole ſkin: ſhe doth ſo baffle her ſelfe, with her owne ſhewes and forwardneſſe, that ſhee doubts not, but her eſtate is good. She ſaith with *Iehu*, Come and ſee the zeale which I have for the Lord of Hoſts. But the Spirit of Grace is a Spirit of diſcerning between errour and truth, it ſeperates between the pretious and the vile, gives clearneſſe to the eyes of the ſimple, cauſing them to judge according to the grounds of the word, which cannot deceive, & to diſtruſt, her owne conjecturall and ſlight bottomes. Truth is able to approve both her ſelfe and her contrary: whereas error can comprehend neither truth nor her owne vanity. And ſecondly, ſhe diſcovers thoſe ſubtilties of Selfe. It were endleſſe to mention them: by a few judge of the reſt. Sometime ſhe is ſo ſlye, that when her affections and duties forſake her, ſhe can recover her ſelfe by her whinings, complaints and mutterings againſt her ſelfe; as if ſhe mourned becauſe ſhe attaines no better fruit of her labours. Sometimes ſhe will pretend that ſhe deſires grace really, and is willing to be ſearched, and that ſhee knowes not that evill which ſhe would not gladly be rid of, that ſhe might attaine it. But yet ſhe deceives herſelfe with dead wiſhes, and will not enſue thoſe meanes cloſely which tend thereto, nor profit by the experience of her owne baſeneſſe; but her experience leaves her dead in the neſt, as it found her, and ſhe will not endure the triall, nor ſet one foot forward to remove the ſtumbling-blocke of her iniquity from before her, and her Idols from between her breaſt.

2 Kings 9.

Pſal. 19.

1.

2.

Ezek. 14.

2 Kings breſt: Therein ſhe is as ſhe was. Againe a third ſubtilty is, that ſhe will ſpare her owne lazy skin, and cut her ſelfe off from thoſe more convincing ordinances and more pertinent and ſeaſonable meanes for her owne good, by putting herſelfe upon ſuch as are lawfull and good in their kinde; as to avoid cloſe attendance to reading of the word, by ſinging of a Pſalme; alſo prayer by reading a Chapter; inſtead of ſecret and private prayer, ſhe will chuſe to pray with others, or in family, or upon a booke; inſtead of extraordinary duties, ſhee will content herſelfe with her ordinary houres; and all to ſhew, that ſhee is glad to put off the Lord and ſave herſelfe harmeleſſe with as ſmall a pittance and as poore meaſures of ſpirit and courage as may be. And commonly when Selfe pitches upon her courſe, this is her property, ſhe is looſe with God in the beſt meanes.

4. Againe, ſhe will ſo contrive her matters, that for the ſhifting of ſome cloſe duty of worſhip, as meditation, ſearching her corruptions, repenting after falls, or renewing covenant: ſhe will alway finde ſome occurrent or other, duty of calling, converſing with others needleſly, or by ſome worke of mercy and duty of the ſecond Table, or any other fained pretence, to rid herſelfe of that which would ſtick to her ſpirit, and diſcover her looſe grounds. Sometime (which I would have marked)

5. when ſhe is ſo hunted, that ſhe cannot ſhelter herſelfe, and is preſſed to leave all for a promiſe; ſhe will turne preſumptuous, and profeſſe that ſhe hath caſt herſelfe upon that alſo, and thereby hath put an end to all her former diſtempers, purpoſing to caſt about and fling out no more, but ſettle herſelfe upon the truth of God: But alas! this her fained cleaving to the word, is nothing elſe, ſave a dead relyance; perhaps ſhee quaſhes her former feares and doubts: But how? Surely by a lazy and ſlothfull pretence of beleeving, that ſhe might be free from any callings upon, reproofes or paines taking, and delude her ſelfe with eaſe: for why? Come to the triall of her confidence, alas! it is without ſavor, peace, contentation or joy of heart, ſapleſſe, barren and ventrous: diſſembling a ſelfe-deniall and calmneſſe of heart, but indeed a lethargy of the ſpirit willing to deceive herſelfe. No true deſire to honour God in the fruit of a ſound courſe, or to purge out old diſtempers can appeare. I ſay, all the ſubtill and ſly tricks of ſelfe-deluſion the Spirit of Grace pierceth into and purgeth the ſoule of: for, looke what I have ſaid of a few, might be ſaid of all the reſt: Although I deny not, but many a poor ſoule hath ſome ſecret ſhreds of Selfe lying hid and unknowne; yet I ſay the nature of the Spirit is to diſcover them, if the ſoule be not wanting thereto. And this be ſaid touching the former generall head of the Spirits oppoſing Selfe.

Second generall. How the Spirit of grace that it ſerves wholly for Grace. In three things. 1. In diſcovering the myſtery of it.

Now for the ſecond generall; a ſecond marke of the Spirit of Grace is, That it ſerves wholly for Grace: And that both in the diſcovery of Grace, in the effects of that diſcovery, and the end of it. For the firſt of theſe. The Spirit of Grace is all for Grace, in the diſcovery of the myſtery of it, the ampleneſſe, largeneſſe, height, depth and length of it to the poore ſoule, that it may appeare in all the excellency and fulneſſe, freedome, bounty, unchangeableneſſe and welbeteamingneſſe thereof; that no corner of it may lie hidden from the heart of a ſinner, ſo farre as

may

may further him in the bottoming of the ſoule in mercy. This is a ſingular and peculiar act of the Spirit, tending to this end, that the ſoule may not ſtagger about the ſufficiency of Grace which God offers unto her; but may behold the power of the Prieſthood of Chriſt, once offering up himſelfe as a compleat and ſpotleſſe ſacrifice and ſatisfaction for the ſins of the elect, needing no more to be offered; able to procure from the Father endleſſe welpleaſedneſſe and acceptance, alſo a free offer of reconciliation, and to create in the ſoule alone and of it ſelfe, (without any antecedent free will, liking and cooperating of Selfe) a moſt ſufficient clearing of conſcience from guilt and feare, yeſterday, to day and for ever. This cannot ſinke into the heart of an hypocrite; he cannot bee perſwaded that there is enough in the Lord Jeſus alone, to diſcharge him in the Court of heaven; the offer and promiſe are empty notions with him, to ſway all his ſtrength upon; neither dare hee reſt thereupon with peace without a further addition of his owne feelings. But the Spirit of Grace grounds the poore ſoule in this, as the maine worke of all, that ſo all the building may ſubſiſt thereon; and makes ſure retreat and refuge for her in the midſt of her diſtreſſe, that her foundation may not be ſhaken. I wiſh that the method of that Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, eſpecially in the 7.8.9.10. Chap. might well be obſerved to the underſtanding of this act of the Spirit.

Heb. 10.3. Heb. 13.8.

2. Secondly, the Spirit of Grace doth not onely offer ſuch a light to the ſoule, but lets it in by her owne working into her, ſetting the ſoule on worke, to concurre with his revealing light, and ſhewing it both that the Lord will conferre no leſſe then all this Sufficiency upon a needing ſoule, and therefore ſhee may (without preſumption) take and partake them from his hand: It ſheweth her that it is the endleſſe & matchleſſe Grace of God, that he can find in his heart to pardon her, yea to caſt love upon her, not only when ſhe ſeems zealous and affectionate (for Self can make her beleeve that) but even when ſhe is baſeſt in her owne eies, and under the conſcience of her guilt; when ſhe is in her bloud, when her originall loathſomeneſſe & her actuall wickednes of thoughts, of words, of wrath, hypocriſie and the like, doe lye as a burthen upon her, yet then, even then (marke what I ſay) he hath love in a corner of his heart, for ſuch an one; (ſuch as he will have herſelfe confeſſe to be) cauſleſſe on her part, yea ſuch, as (if he had no more aime at being knowne to be loving, then to love for any amiable thing in the object) he would never ſhew to any.

3. Nay more, leſt the Spirit of Grace ſhould leave any thing behinde him, he doth offer to create the gift of faith in the ſoule, to claſpe upon this gift of mercy; and includes this gift in the offer, as knowing that it were in vaine to offer the one, without working the other. And hereby he cauſeth the ſoule to lay hold upon his ſtrength and ability to ſave, (as having received a ranſome ſufficient:) which is no other, ſaving the writing of his covenant in the fleſhy tables of her heart, prepared by himſelfe for the nonce.

Eſay 57.19.

Eſay 27.4.5.

And moreover, that all this hee hath done of his owne free will and motion, without any former principle acting him to intend it, or concurring with him to create it: I ſay, he hath done it of himſelfe, as judging it meet for himſelfe to doe (whatſoever we bee) and for the glory of his

2 Kings 5.

his Name: No entreaty of men or Angels, no difficult tearmes of perſwaſion cauſed it: but it flowed naturally from him, as moſt honourable to his Majeſtie to doe.

Fifthly, the Spirit of Grace ſtayes not here, but proceedes to accommodate the ſoule to embrace this power of God: for to what end ſhould the Lord be willing to do it in her & for her, except ſhe alſo felt ſutable inclinations wrought in her ſoul towards it: And therefore he moves her, ſadly to digeſt this grace offered, to count it no light nor ſtrange thing, no nor yet beyond the ſoules apprehenſion; but as on the one ſide hee cauſeth it to be moſt weighty, pretious, and to be highly valued: ſo, on the other ſide he makes it familiar, ſweet, clear and evident: not a thing above the clouds, nor under the earth, farre fetcht, but neere the ſoule, put into her boſome, belonging to her, not to bee rejected, or thruſt away from her, except ſhe will periſh. Theſe, together with the infinite benefite of receiving it, and the endleſſe loſſe in forgoing it (as being the onely remedy) doe marvellouſly ſtabliſh the thoughts upon it, and raviſh the affections with it, ſo that layes a moſt ſad charge upon the poore ſoule (upon paine of forfeiting her peace for ever) not to paſſe it by ſlightly, deadly, and formally; but to view and medirate of it ſavourly, deeply, unwearyedly, with admiration, till by this mirrour of beholding the Lord with open face, ſhe be transformed to the glorioufnes of this grace, and carried, yea left in the ſtreame thereof by the Spirit of the Lord. This for the firſt of the three particulars.

Rom. 10.

2 Cor. 3. end.

The ſecond worke the effect hereof, viz. Union.

The ſecond, is the effect of this preſenting worke of the Spirit. And that is union: Whereby the Spirit of Grace ſhewes the ſoule into what a condition ſhe is tranſlated by faith in the promiſe. That is, ſhe is made one with the Lord Jeſus thereby, and really partaker of all his good things, true peace, contentment in bleſſings, croſſes, all conditions, freedome from all former garboiles, feares, enemies, joy in God and his ſalvation, never to be divorced from him any more. This cauſes the ſoule to ſhake off that wearifomeneſſe of Selfe, never ſettled; that bottomeleſſeneſſe, never grounded; that inconſtancy and vanity, never at reſt: and why? Becauſe it had no reall good to faſten upon, and to determine thoſe reſtleſſe deſires of hearts: But now, the Lord Jeſus himſelfe both in his preſent grace and hope of glory to come, runnes in her ſtreame, or rather turnes hers into his: ſo that looke what Selfe was to her before, emptily and barrenly: now Chriſt is in her ſtead. Chriſt is the Selfe of the ſoule; he is all in all to her, acts her, comforts her, ſtaies her, quickens her, guides, upholds her in all ſtraits and troubles. As Selfe was a body of death in her before, eaſily beſetting her; ſo is Chriſt now a very reall being of Truth and Grace, a very life of being and welfare unto her. Now the ſoule is willing to ſhake off Selfe, becauſe ſhe hath a better thing in poſſeſſion; which frees her from the old yrkeſomeneſſe, vanity, bondage and unſubſiſtence, which before ſhe was diſquieted with. Oh! it is a wonderfull priviledge to a poore ſoule, that whereas before it was tedious to her to muſe of the promiſe, to deny her owne hopes, flaſhes and pangs, to cleave to the bottome of another out of herſelfe: now all theſe are become ſweet unto her, becauſe Chriſt is now inſtead of Selfe unto her, even all in all. Before it was a violent worke to apply the

the ſoule to meditation; for ſhe was out of the element of Grace; but now ſhe counts it familiar worke, becauſe the preſence of Chriſt hath made it ſo: a mercy more worth, then all the world beſide, when ſhee conſiders duly of it. Before ſhee was haled as a Beare to the ſtake, to the word, to the ſacraments, to other ordinances, duties: now ſhe hath fellowſhip with them as her owne, even as ſhe is Chriſts: before ſhe knew not what to make of herſelfe, her affections, her deſires; but now ſhee is able to diſcerne what God hath done for her and her affections, mournings and duties, ſtand not up in the roome of Chriſt, but flow from him ſafely, and returne to him, as the waters to the ſea, whence they came. Oh! what oddes is there betweene the dead life of Selfe, moving the ſoule heavily, as *Pharaohs* charet wanting their wheeles; and the living life of Chriſt, alway affording ſome warmth, vigor, breath and motion to the ſoule, and aſſuring her that is not from herſelfe, but from a principle without, which will not faile her: Oh! this ſecond *Adams* quickning ſpirit, is as far above that dead principle of Selfe, as a living creature is above an Image.

The third is the end.

Thirdly, the Spirit of Grace drawes the ſoule to the end of Grace! to behold the purpoſe of God in declaring the riches of that mercy, by which he ſaved a ſinner: that he might purchaſe more glory to himſelfe, then good to the ſoule. Of this I ſpake before by another occaſion: only note this, that the Spirit carries Selfe out of the ſoule hereby. For when the ſoule is raviſhed with the view of thoſe excellencies of God manifeſted by redemption, ſhe loſeth herſelfe as in a ſtreame, as being aſhamed to thinke that ſhe ſhould ſo baſely ſtruggle for that, by her own ſtrength, which onely the Spirit of the promiſe can conduct her unto, for the ends of the promiſe, ſerving to make the Lord admirable in his Saints: Oh! how is the ſoul aſhamed, yea confounded for her own folly, that ſhe ſhould goe about the fadoming of ſo bottomleſſe depth, with her owne bucket! I conclude theſe three branches with renewing my exhortation: Try your ſelves by theſe, whether the Spirit of Grace bee in you or no; for if it be, it hath the promiſe of a full bottome to ſtabliſh the ſoule upon, it hath brought realneſſe of comfort and peace into it, and it hath carried it into the ſea of the riches of grace, ſo that it can make ſongs of the Lords deliverance, with more admiration, then if the inheritance of a Prince had befalne it. I cannot inſiſt now any longer. So much for the ſecond marke, that the Spirit of Grace is for Grace.

The third marke is, The calme proceeding of this Spirit of Grace.

To make an end, a third and laſt marke of the Spirit of Grace is, that it goeth forward calmely and ſoftly in her purſuit of the promiſe, without any carnall ſtriving and violence of Selfe, much leſſe fretting and diſtemper of ſpirit upon Gods delaies. She teaches the ſoule to waite upon the Lord and harken what he would ſay to his Saints, for he will ſpeake peace to them, that they may not returne to folly, their old ſelfe-ſtaggering, unſettledneſſe or bondage: The Spirit of Grace is much like the Temple of *Salomon*, it loves not to hear the din of Selfe to diſquiet it, as hammers and tooles might not bee uſed in the building of the other. While he is at worke, he cannot endure Selfe to diſturbe him: he will raiſe up the frame himſelfe, we muſt onely ſay, Grace, grace unto it, but he will both lay the foundation and corner ſtone, and ſet the building

Pſal. 85. 8.

1 King. 6. 7.

Zach. 4. 7.

2 Kings

ding upon it, and it shall prosper in his hands. Suffer we our selves orderly, and by degrees to be led from step to step, without turning off on the right hand or the left, meekely and patiently attending his leasure in our innocency, and use of meanes, and foist not any secret weights of our owne into the ballance, as if the Lord were not alone able to perfect his owne worke: onely let there be no stops in our owne spirits, to set backe or quench this Spirit of Grace, under the pretence of our quiet and patient waiting: A point which no hypocrite can discerne. If he be bidden to rest, he leaves his diligence, and waxes idle; whereas true strife and true rest goe together, and a poore soule so rests from his selfe-striving, that yet he continues his selfe-denying diligence in the use of meanes. Try your selves also in this, but I remember I have touched more part before, when I spake of the violence of Selfe. This shall therefore suffice to have spoken touching the markes of this Spirit of Grace, and the severall branches thereof.

1 Thes. 5.

Esay 30.

Quest. 2. How this Spirit of grace may be attained.

Now in a word, for the other peece of the question, how this Spirit of Grace may be attained? I answer briefly, First, be earnest in prayer to God for it (for the Spirit of Grace and supplication are joyned together. *Zach.* 12.10.) That both the Lord would cast down this strong castle of Selfe, and raise up the strong fort of his own salvation upon the ruines thereof: joyne with prayer, meditation, be much in the use of all other powerfull ordinances of God, (fasting especially) the true *Sampson* to cast down the house over the head of self and unbeleefe: And observe seriously the graces of others, (such as have not this gulfe, and have had the experience of Christ in them:) Again seek not to please our flesh, (as it is said *David* would never crosse *Adonija* from his youth, and that made him such a good one) but abridge our selves of our wills even in some lawfull liberties, and abstaine from many things which others permit to themselves: dyet our selves daily as those which runne for a prize, and that may somewhat inure us to deny our selves in this great worke of Grace. Tye our selves closely to the duties of our places and callings, and be not too indulgent to our backs, bellies, companies, travells, and the like sensuall recreations and contentments: many men affect such a breadth in the uttermost of their liberties and jollitie, that their very garbe bewraies them to bee men who savor not much of denying themselves: goe to the Lord often with this thorne in thy heele, and bemoane thy paine unto him, till he ease thee! as *Paul* did, and ceased not, till the spirit was sufficient for him: Beseech the Lord not to leave thee to thine owne findings, but to take thee into his own patronage, maintaining thee at his cost and charge: It is said that *Jeconia* (long after his obedience to the Prophet *Jeremy*, to yeeld up himselfe to the King of Babel) was so honoured by God, as to become of a vassall and captive, a favorite, and to be nourished from the Kings owne dish, to have a portion of meate from him daily: meditation of the Pearle. *Matth.* 13.44. caused the Merchant to sell all and buy it. How doth *Paul Phil.* 3. heate his heart with the Lord Jesus, till hee cast out himselfe as dung? *David Psal.* 73. recovers himselfe out of his temptation of distrust and impatience by meditation, and then breakes out, Whom have I in heaven but thee? *Mary* bred Christ in her soule, by pondering the message of the

1 Kin. 1.6.

1 Cor. 9.25.

2 Cor. 12.6.

Jerem. 52.31.

Luke 2.51.

Angell

Angell againſt her feare and doubting. Nothing a greater nouriſher of Selfe then unacqaintance and ſlothfull neglect of the promiſe.

Againe, behold the practice of the Saints, both in Scripture and experience, both living and dying, how they have moulded their ſouls into the truth of God, and have been content to hazard their own ſalvation, thereupon ſaying, if I periſh, I periſh: Let alſo (as I toucht before) the afflictions of God, whether in our bodies or ſoules, breake us off from our wilde olive ſtock, and implant us into the naturall and ſweet olive: Say, Lord it is a ſweet mercy not to live to my ſelf, (though it coſt me deare to learne this diſcipline) but to be at thine allowance. As an idle wench chuſeth to live baſely and idely at her owne hand, rather then under a Miſtreſſe: ſo would Self do, if God did not over-rule the ſoul: But when ſhe is corrected and inſtructed, then ſhe ſmites upon her thigh and repenteth. Laſtly, be not too eager in purſuit of our worldly affairs, but quietly let us ſet our boate upon our ſtreame of providence, to croſſe our ſelves in our carnall appetites, and though God croſſe us not, yet deny we our ſelves, inuring our hearts to mercy & compaſſion, to ſuch as are in neceſſity, bodily or ſpirituall: Let not Papiſts (the chiefe favorites of Selfe) condemne us Proteſtants in this kinde; farre it be it from us to foſter a ſpirit of envy, which luſteth in us after uncharitableneſſe, indignation, moroſity, auſterity, cenſoriouſneſſe, anger, revenge, ſuſpitions, contentions, diſcontents, either with men, or with providence and Gods adminiſtrations, that pleaſe us not: for theſe morall diſtempers will defile us ſpiritually, if we be not aware of it. Seeke not honour, repute, reſpect and acknowledgement from men, let God alone with theſe, and let us not for ſuch baſe ſcurfe (yet highly ſet by in the world) deſtroy the worke of God. Oh! beloved, conſider what I have ſaid of this weighty argument, and the Lord give us underſtanding in all things! for mine owne part, I have cauſe to mourn, that notwithſtanding all I have ſpoken, I have ſo ſmall hope to prevaile with men, becauſe I goe againſt their edge, and ſpeake riddles, to men of another metall! What are we but ſignes and ſpectacles to men and divells in preaching theſe doctrines? What ſerve we for, ſave to harden their hearts? For they will fulfill the doctrine, and Selfe is like to quaſh their hopes when all is done! The Lord prevent it in you for his mercies ſake. And ſo much alſo ſhall ſuffice for this whole uſe of exhortation, to them that ſeeke converſion.

Heb. 13 7.

8.

9.

Jam. 4.4.

Joh. 5.44.

Now concerning the latter branch of Exhortation, to them who (through mercy) are converted already: Let me urge this upon them, ſo much the rather to deny all for Chriſt and his name; by how much they have already obtained favour to count all as droſſe in reſpect of pardon and reconciliation: If in the former reſpect that of our Saviour be true, how much more in the latter; He that will bee my Diſciple muſt deny all, (if the caſe ſo require) take up his croſſe and follow me: And the truth is, ſuch are the times we now live in, that I am (in a manner) forced to adde this point of uſe to the former. For, you muſt know, the former is ſecret from the view of men (though one day it ſhall be knowne to men and Angells) ſo that we ſhould doe men a world of wrong, if we ſhould judge them to bee other then ſelfe-denyers and beleevers. But indeed, there is another ſelfe-deniall a conſequent upon faith and that is

2. Branch of Exhortation. Gods people muſt practiſe ſelfe-deniall in their converſation.

Matth. 16. end.

2 Kings

an outward renouncing of our ſelves, and ſelling our ſelves out of all our profits, pleaſures, eaſe and liberties for the name, the truth of doctrine, the profeſſion of Chriſt in power; That rather then we would betray theſe to the enemies thereof, neither liberties nor lives ſhould be deare to us: Now herein what doe men? Alas! they ſhew that either they never knew what it meant to caſt out Selfe, to receive Chriſt, or elſe they have found a narrow diſtinction between barke and tree, to ſave themſelves harmeleſſe: *viz.* That although they deny themſelves inwardly for him never ſo, yet they have a diſpenſation, ſo that outwardly they will not loſe a dramme of wealth, credit, maintenance, eaſe, love of wife, child, will or appetite for his ſake. And at this plat the world of our profeſſors now fall off: They love Chriſt with their hearts, but they will not loſe one ſtraw for him: Alas! what wonder that it is ſo with them? For why? To deny a mans ſelfe for Chriſt, requires a better bottome then they have any: The Lord Jeſus never denyed himſelfe to the death for the redemption of their ſoules, never gave himſelfe as a price to wrath for their pardon and peace: The Apoſtle *Rom.* tells us, Doubtleſſe for a good man one would be content to dye: Chriſt hath not been a good Chriſt to them, for if he had, they would deny themſelves to the death for him. They are upon their owne bottome ſtill: their owne eaſe, will, health, pleaſures, life and liberties are too deare to them; they love them as pretiouſly, as a zealous Chriſtian loves Chriſt; therefore they will part with nothing for him. If Chriſt were their Selfe, their inner man, their joy and content, they would cleave to him as their naturall and beloved object; The truth hath not made them free; for if it had, they would forſake all for it, and buy it whatſoever it coſt them, but not ſell it, whatſoever they might have for it.

Cauſes.

1. Why moſt men ſo little deny themſelves for Chriſt?

2. Beſides, they know not what ſpirit they are of; while peace laſteth, and the Goſpel runnes in the ſtreame of their liberties, gifts, ſervices, commodities, and advantages, who but they? An humble and zealous Chriſtian would almoſt tremble to heare their proteſtations, their engagements for God and truth, the cauſe of Chriſt and Religion; who but they in their faſtings and prayers, deepe deteſtation of the ſinnes of the times, and mourning for the ſorrowes of ſuch as ſuffer? But let the winde turne to another coaſt, ſo that they ſee the enemies of truth lay hard to their free hold, and they muſt either ſadly ſuffer indeed for that they have profeſſed, or elſe bewray themſelves to be hypocrites: Then they ſhew upon what hinges their doore hanges and turnes, even upon Selfe and ſelfe-love: Then they wax ſtiffe for themſelves, then they cleave to the creature, their eaſe and welfares, their liberties and worldly contents. Why this? Alas! They underſtood not their owne ſpirit, and therefore it laid them in the ſuds ere they were aware. Now their great declaiming againſt the ſinnes of time-ſervers and ſelfe-loving hypocrites, is turned to apologize for their inconſtancy, ſelfe-love and ends of their owne: Moreover, another cauſe is, they ſought not Chriſt ſimply and honeſtly for himſelfe, but for ſomewhat which might bee gotten from him, to ſerve their owne turne by his meanes: They know not how to licke themſelves whole upon the Lord Jeſus for any thing they loſe for him; and therefore they are loath to venture any more;

3.

then

then they must quite make forfeit of. If they knew whom to trust for amends, or could beleeve that hundred fold requitall for God and his Gospel, which is promised to all that lose any thing for him; Oh! it would lithe their hearts exceedingly to suffer any thing for him! To conclude, they consider not what a poore bargaine they make of it, when they sell the honour and glory of the Lord Jesus, for the redeeming of a poore transitory content here below: they consider not that they fish with a golden hooke for minums; if they lose their hooke upon a shrag of triall and temptation, they can never make amends againe for it, by all they catch, though the fish were fairer. Conscience is no commodity to weigh in the balance against ease, and carnall profits and pleasures: as *Elisha* asked *Gehazi*, Is this a season to purchase olives and vineyards, and menservants or maidservants? They consider not what poor and silly figleaves they sow together to cover their nakednesse, when they pretend a necessity of serving God their owne way, (that way which will hold best agreement with their own ends) to shun serving him his way of suffering, which contradicts their self-love. In all these respects and in many more, let us not wonder at the wofull declension of these revolting times, which leave the Lord Jesus himselfe to sinke or swim. Nay further, let us not be offended overmuch at such as at their first entry and onset upon Religion, seemed so zealous as to chalenge all enemies of Christ, and began to suffer for him: But having born the brunt a while, and felt the triall too hot and too heavy for them, have with more shame and reproach revolted from him, then ever they began to suffer with honour and commendation.

Counsells to helpe this. Exhortation.

And sithence it fareth thus, let all whom it concerneth, to approve their faith and fidelity to the Lord Jesus (as it doth concerne all who will not prove hypocrites) now in these wofull daies, strive for the holding up and preserving the entire honour and esteem of Christ & his Grace, his truth, profession and Gospel, both in their owne soules with sincerity, and before men without shame or cowardize. Consider (poore soule) by whose strength thou standest: do not look too wisely upon next hand examples of staggerers and timeservers, though perhaps thou hast admired them for their zeale and gifts: know them by their fruits; stagger not at their revolts: But looke to Jesus the author and finisher of thy faith, who for the hope set before him, and the love to thy soule and salvation, despised the shame, and endured the crosse: Behold (if examples do so much affect thee) the patternes of those faithfull ones, who in all ages have borne witnesse to Jesus, and not esteemed their credits, or goods, or lives, so that they might vindicate the glory of Christ, and discharge the trust which in baptisme, and much more in their conversion to God was committed to them; to be faithfull souldiers, and to contend for the truth, against Divell and his instruments, the world and their own fleshly selfe-love: The Lord hath had in all ages some who have though it a businesse of importance to sticke to Christ and his honour, whatsoever it cost them; although thy strength be small, the trialls of the malicious sharpe and fiery as darts; yet if thou canst deny thine owne selfe, humble thy soule, be little in thine owne eies, be above thine owne ends and sensuality: Then that God who hath suffered thousands of subtill selfe-

Heb. 12. 2.

2 Kings

Pſal. 92. 7.

Counſells.

1. loving hypocrites to fall on thy right hand, and thy left, ſhall keepe thee ſafe in the midſt under the covert of the wings, and ſhadow of his Almighty power. And to this end and purpoſe, firſt, get faith in Trialls, (more pretious then gold,) and looke not to ſuffer for Chriſt by thine owne ſtrength, but get ſtrength from him whom thou ſuffereſt for: Get thee his innocency, be ſure thy cauſe be good, joyne with it a good conſcience, (two excellent banners to fight under) and then by prayer, beg from Chriſt that ſtrength, courage, meekneſſe, ſimplicity, ſelfe-deniall, unaſhamednesſe to confeſſe him, and to ſuffer for him, which becommeth one, who hath received thy being of grace, and the hope of welbeing of glory for ever from him. Beleeve that hee who nayled all enmity of Satan and the gates of hell, to his croſſe, hath riſen by the might of his Godhead, and is at his right hand; will ſo provide, that the remnant of their conquered and captivated malignity and malice, ſhall never prevaile againſt thee. If ever thou tookeſt hold of his ſtrength to ſave thee from hell and from periſhing, truſt him for ſtrength to overcome all earthly enemies; he can and will ſubdue them unto thee, divert them, diſarme them, diſable them, and give thee full redemption from them. If ever hee built thee ſoundly upon his rocke, feare not, neither ſtormes, nor ſands, nor tempeſts, nor any aſſaults ſhall ever cauſe thy building to ruinate: but thou ſhalt ſtand, becauſe built upon a rock.

2. Secondly, be not heedleſſe and careleſſe of trouble, but be well ſettled and informed in thy judgement, concerning the weight and the importance of the truth of God. Let not trouble for the cauſe of Chriſt, finde thee ſo buſied about doing for him, that thou ſhouldeſt neglect the conſideration of thoſe weighty reſpects, for which he calls thee to ſuffer alſo. Many irreſolute and ſtaggering ones have done Chriſt as much diſhonour, as ſome libertines and timeſervers: Selfe-love and eaſe hath ſo blinded them on the one ſide, that they can looke but one way: As thou canſt not deny but truth is pretious, powerfull, and prevailing: So adde this thereto, aske what is truth, ſtudy it, inquire into it, & the conſequences which attend upon, both the faithfull ſticking to it, againſt all enemies, and the treacherous traducing it, for fear, or flattery, or any ſiniſter ends. Remember that of *Davids* ſervants, and apply it to truth, thou art worth tenne thouſand of us, if we fall, there be others to raiſe up in our ſtead; but if thou fall, how irrecoverable is thy loſſe? And ſay not, this truth or that, I could ſuffer for, but ſuch and ſuch I dare not; for if thou honor not God in denying thy owne cavils, and ſuffering for any truth, perhaps thou ſhalt be ſo left to thy ſelfe-ſhifts, and ſnared by thine owne treachery, that either God will deny thee an heart, or the honour to ſuffer in greater truths, if occaſion ſerve.

3. Thirdly, know for certaine, God will have a day to trie thee, what coſt thou wilt be at for him. If he have brought thee through the pikes of the enemies of thy converſion; truſt to it, he will have ſome triall or other, to know all that is in thine heart. God beſtowes no great favours (eſpecially Chriſt himſelfe) but he will be ſure to try thee throughly of what mettall thou art made, and whether the experience of his firſt and greateſt love have deſerved at thine hands the fruit of thy faith, to cling to him, and be of more worth, then thine owne ends and contents: He rejoyceth to diſ-

cover

cover thoſe who are firme to him, and beare him hearty loyall affection, from the hollow and falſe. If *Abraham*, *Hezechia*, *Ionah*, *Peter*, wanted not their trialls, (of whom ſome ſtuck to God, others warped) ſhalt thou eſcape? Nay if God would try *Saul* and *Ieroboam* and *Iehu*, ſo deepely, will he paſſe thee over? No bee not ſuch a foole as to thinke that thou ſhalt ſcape in a miſt; ſwimme alway in a calme ſea, and runne a ſmooth courſe; for as verily as God is true, thou ſhalt be tried, yea perhaps many wayes, one after another. Reſolve thy ſelfe, it is no ſlight thing in Gods eſteeme to try his: if he ſhould leave them without trialls, (whereof all ſonnes are partakers) they were baſtards: it is droſſe and no oare which is not worth the trying: eaſie duties of praying, hearing and worſhip are no trialls for Gods cloſe people in theſe dayes, he will have other trialls for them; and although perhaps thou hadſt ſcaped many windes and blaſts, yet he will have ſome direct and oppoſite winde to try thee to the quicke, ere the Lord have done with thee. Selfe had need have trialls as *Gideons* ſouldiers. Heb. 12. 8.

Upon theſe conſiderations, apply this exhortation briefly to thy ſelfe. Be for him that hath beene for thee. even the Lord Jeſus, be for his glory and honour to thy uttermoſt. I will commend but two paſſages to thee. Firſt in the feare of God (my beloved) be ſure that you deny your ſelves for God in the point of doing for him. Secondly, in the matter of ſuffering; in both which thy whole obedience ſtandeth. I urge no exactneſſe but ſuch as the Goſpel both promiſes and affords to a beleeving ſoule; onely I exclude treachery and falſhood. For the former, aime at God, and deny thy ſelfe in thy doings and duties, in thy worſhip and uſe of meanes, in thy ſpeciall calling and condition of life. This will inure thee to the latter ſelfe-deniall in ſuffering: Throughout thy whole converſation of life towards God and man, thou ſhalt finde, that (from the center of ſelfe-love) the Divell will teach thee to draw lines of crookedneſſe and obliquity, warping from God, and tending to it ſelfe. The ſoule cannot endure to be under the authority of God, either commanding, promiſing, or threatning; it hath a bredth of her owne, in the narrow of God, and where ſhee can fleece away ought from him and his ends to herſelfe ſhe is ſafe; yea where the duties are ſtricteſt, ſhee bewraies moſt a falſe heart, which being pincht in the point of her owne ends, is ready to caſt all in the dirt. In faſting, what pleaſure can the ſoule finde to herſelfe, inſtead of ſoule afflicting? Much more then in ordinary duties ſhe will diſpence and ſeeke herſelfe. In mens buyings and ſellings, how doe they foiſt in a dreg of ſeeking themſelves, loath to lye cloſe to the rule, to doe as they would bee done too? In preaching the ſolemne truthes of God, what a deale of ſelfe-honour and men-pleaſing creeps into the duty? What duties, meanes or graces are there, which are void of this dead fly? Witneſſe the innumerable diſpenſations which this libertine age ſeekes to herſelfe in all her wayes; in faſhions, attires, recreations, worldly dealings, lending, letting, hyring and borrowing: In the duty of prayer how ſcanty, ſeldome, carnall, are wee? Looking ſometime more at them that heare us, or at the fetneſſe of our ſentences, edge of our owne affections, then at Gods awfull preſence, our owne abaſement, or the ſpeciall ends that concerne us? What cauſes ſo

Application of all in two duties.

1. To doe all for God.

See Hoſ. 10. 1.

Eſay 58. 3. 4.

2 Kings

little mourning and fasting for the sinnes and sorrowes that are upon us, or hang over us? Selfe-love; every man lookes to his owne matters, his owne griefes, losses take up all his teares and desires? What causes Magistrates to be so partiall and connivent at offenders, at drunkards, breakers of the Sabbath? Selfe-love, they are affraid to be noted to bee precizer then needs, they seeke their owne bribes or ease; men are loath to disquiet themselves for God or conscience: Whence comes our murmuring under our crosses, or our sottishnesse and insensiblenesse under them? Both from selfe-love; either tendernesse to our owne skin, or loathnesse to be at any cost to search out the causes, to humble the soule, or to repent: loathnesse (I say) to lay any thing to heart: What is the cause of so many jarres and janglings among Christians, for meere trifles, to the dishonour of God and their communion? Selfe-love, that seekes her owne ease and profit, little looking how others fare; Christians in generall will professe selfe-deniall, yet take pritches, discontents: Endlesse it were to mention all: learne we to seeke God in all we doe, and whatsoever we finde our conscience to accuse us of, as an excrement and superfluity of our owne, beware we nourish it not in our selves, lest it poyson the carriage, the bent and streame of our indeavours with singularity, hypocrisie, and selfe-love. Shake off conceits, rash surmizes, tetches, enmities, sullen froward humors.

2. In suffering.

Lastly, be not onely willing and well content to beare for God, (if we be called to it justly without thrusting our selves upon troubles) but especially labour to quite our selves well in our sufferings. True it is, to shunne God, and seeke our selves, our owne ease and welfare, betraying our conscience, is a fearefull treachery; but yet, there is a further mischiefe then this to be shunned; and that is, be we sure that wee suffer for God, and have him that knowes our hearts to beare us witnesse, that (setting aside humane frailty) the sincere aime of our hearts in suffering, is, the promoting of the glory of God, and the entire and tender respect we have to preserve his truth inviolable: There is a white divell corrupting us in the bent and aime of our sufferings, as well as a blacke, to disswade us from suffering at all: one Divell (under two colours) aimes at this, either at the losse of our soules, when we wickedly seeke to save our selves from suffering, or the losse of the honour of our sufferings, when we lose our reward, through our base and hollow seeking our own selves. Such as suffer in these dayes for Christ, had need be well bottomed, and carried upon such grounds as will beare us out and save our stake. For, such as suffer out of a proud, presumptuous singularity of their own, to be thought some body, hoping they shall be able to licke themselves whole by some outward encouragements, or otherwise rush upon crosses in their heate and rashnesse; are like (in such a world as this) to meet with a wrong match of it. And we have seene some examples before our eies to verifie this by wofull experience, that others may learne by their shame and harmes, to beware of their selfe-heate and rashnesse. The Divell getting ground, and the cause of God losing exceedingly by such Merchant venturers, not to speake of the shipwracke that such make of their owne peace. Suffer therefore for Christ; and suffer so for him, that thy conscience may stand by thee for the sincerity

Note this experience.

of

of thine intentions; and the Spirit of glory ſhall reſt upon thee, and with *Stephen*, he (whoſe cauſe thou ſuffereſt for) ſhall diſcover himſelfe unto thee, not onely in his allowing of thee, but his crowning of thee both here with the honour of ſuffering, and hereafter with glory for ſuffering, as 1 *Pet.* 4. end, and in neither reſpect will he ſuffer thee to repent or bee aſhamed. But I muſt not here (in this uſe of addition and by conſequent) runne out into a common place; ſome other fitter occaſion will offer it ſelfe for this purpoſe. Thus much ſhall ſerve for the whole exhortation; and ſo for the whole doctrine of Selfe, ſo farre as the Lord hath given grace. Now what ſhall I ſay, (brethren) for concluſion, but preſſe us all to ſeeke God, who ſuffers not his raines and dew to returne in vain, but to fructifie his truth in the hearts of his owne people, that he would not withdraw his bleſſing from this doctrine, which wee have at large inſiſted on in this and the former Sermon? Let us pray, that with *Pauls* planting, and *Apollo's* watering, God would give encreaſe.

1 Pet. 4. 14. Acts 7. 55.

Eſay 55. 9.

THE

THE SEVENTH LECTVRE upon the words following in the twelfth Verſe.

VERSE XII.

VERSE 12. *Are not Abana and Pharfar, rivers of Damaſcus, better then all the waters of Iſrael? may I not waſh in them and be cleane? So he went away in a rage, &c.*

VERS 13. *Then his ſervants came neere, and ſpake unto him, and ſaid, Father, if the Prophet had ſayd ſome great thing, &c.*

2 Kings

The clearing of the coherence, & ſenſe of this verſe.

IN the former verſe (beloved in the Lord) wee have examined the ground of *Naamans* diſtaſte of the Prophets meſſage: and that was (as wee have ſhewed) a prejudice or pre-conceit of a way of his owne deviſing, without bottome or ground of truth. Touching the which, as we noted whence it came, even from the root of Selfe, ſo we raiſed a generall ground of doctrine from it; and have ſaid what God hath ſuggeſted unto our thoughts, concerning the reaſons, openings, and ſeverall uſes of it, repeating nothing thereof: let us come forward to this twelfth verſe. For although the holy Ghoſt doth omit ſundry paſſages of this ſtory (as the thing was carried) yet hee will not have us ignorant of any materiall thing, which might profit us: And therefore here he relates the amplification of *Naamans* diſtaſte, from a ſecond allegation of his; and that is, from a ſupply of Selfe, by carnall reaſon. No two friends in the world are ſo ready to ſuccour each other at a pinch, as carnall reaſon is at hand to ſuccour Self. The more is ſaid, the worſe the diſeaſe rankles; but yet that which ſound reaſon cannot make good, lo, carnall reaſon muſt be faine to ſupply. A poore help (I grant) but a poore one is better then none with a corrupt heart. If the former anſwer and bottome of his diſtaſte had been as good as it was large, he had not now needed to have multiplied ſo many words as he doth; but being crazie in them, hee muſt make that good with words which wants ſubſtance: and therefore hee now comes in with an argument of another kinde to ſtiffen himſelfe in his former conceit, drawne from the nature of the

the meſſage it ſelfe; to wit, that it was unlikely, ridiculous, and in truth (upon point) impoſſible: And therefore he did well to turne away and be angry, as he was.

How he backeth one evill with another.

The words come to thus much, as if he had ſaid: There was cauſe enough to reject the Prophets anſwer, becauſe it croſſeth mine expectation; my thoughts were farre otherwiſe then his meſſage, I looked hee would have come himſelfe and diſpatcht it; therefore I had reaſon enough before to recoile from his anſwer: But now, put caſe my conceit be ungrounded, and I my ſelfe faulty therefore; yet, let me but examine the meſſage it ſelfe, as it lies, and there is great cauſe to diſtaſte it, in that regard alſo. For why? What ſenſe or reaſon is there in it? Forſooth he bids me goe waſh in Jordan? And what likelihood is there that Jordan ſhould heale leproſie? When was it ever heard of till now? What need Iſrael have one Leper in it, if Jordan will heale him? And, ſure I am, if waters were able to doe it, then much more would better waters doe it. Wee have two famous rivers in Damaſcus, Abana and Pharfar by name, farre purer ſtreames, and (in repute) better waters, then either Jordan, or any other waters of Iſrael whatſoever: And, if they never healed a Leper, much leſſe (I trow) can Jordan. This being thus, who ſhould blame me for rejecting this meſſage? Yea, for diſtemper and anger? Can fleſh and bloud endure to be ſent for to a Prophet, and to be thus mocked? I conclude therefore, his meaning is nothing leſſe, then to cure my diſeaſe: he doth but try my patience, and put a tricke upon me, and ſo my labour is loſt. This is the view of this verſe. Now, what doth all this amount unto? Surely (in a word) to confute and outcavill the meſſage, by carnall reaſon, and ſuch abſurdities as might grow thence. For why? Hee diſputes thus; This meſſage is againſt common ſenſe, unlikely, yea impoſſible to reaſon, therefore ridiculous and falſe; the conſequence of it makes it abſurd: for (I ſay againe) if waters would heale, what need any to bee Lepers in Iſrael? And why may not better waters much better doe it? Therefore, away, talke no further to me of it, leave me to my ſelf, no man ſhall beat out my brains, or ever perſwade me to that which common ſenſe doth ſo notoriouſly contradict.

The abſurdity of his reaſon.

But, O *Naaman*! whither wilt thou? Is it not too much for thee to be mad with Selfe, but thou wilt alſo be mad with reaſon? In thy former anſwer thou playedſt but the foole: for what although thou thoughtſt ſo and ſo? Was the Prophet tied to thy thoughts? Or could the Prophet doe more or leſſe without warrant from God? Cameſt thou to a Phyſitian with a fee, or to God for a miracle? If to God, why ſuffereſt thou not him to caſt the skole, and to worke his owne way, and to confute thine? And now in this latter anſwer, thou wilt be mad with reaſon. For why? Put caſe the way of waſhing in Jordan bee irrationall and non-ſenſe to thy wit and reaſon; and what though there bee ſtill ſo many in Iſrael unhealed? And what if Abana bee a purer ſtreame? Doſt thou come to the Prophet to be cured by plaiſters, and by skill of a man, or by the power of God? If this latter, why art thou ſo mad as to tye a ſuperiour cauſe to the inferiour? Or to judge that to bee the health of thy diſeaſe, which is but a ſigne? Or to run to the creature

from

2Kings

from the Divinity and Omnipotencie of a Creator? Or, what haſt thou to doe to run to other Lepers? Or to compare Jordan with other waters? Look thou up to God, whoſe power exceeds all thy ſenſe, who ſeeks the honour of his owne worke, not of a creature, and be content to be cured againſt and above all reaſon and ſenſe, ſo thou mayſt bee really cured: It is thy priviledge above all other Lepers in Iſrael, to bee thus cured by *Eliſha*. Cavill not therefore againſt thy priviledge: it is not Jordans water more then any other (by any vertue of it) which muſt heale thee (for then indeed Abana might doe it as well or better) but the God and ruler of Jordan and all creatures to ſerve his will, ſo farre as ſeemeth beſt to his wiſedome. Thus *Naaman* ſhould have ſaid in ſtead of his cavilling. So much for the opening of this verſe.

Two things then we ſee in this verſe: Firſt, the carnall exception here taken by *Naaman* againſt the meſſage, which ſet him further off the remedy, and wronged him more and more of his owne hope. The ſecond, the iſſue and effect of both the former anſwer, and this cavill: hee concludeth that the Prophet mocks him, and therefore in ſtead of holding the former reverend eſteeme of his perſon, now hee falles downeright to rage and raile upon him, to fret and fume at his defeat, and to turne his back homeward; rather then he will give up his two weapons, he will needs depart and goe home, a moſt nafty Leper as he came.

Doctrine.

From the former of theſe two, viz. *Naamans* exception, and the frivolouſneſſe of it, I might ſtay the Reader upon this meditation; How full and fertile a baſe heart of corruption and unbeliefe is of ſtoppes and barres to deprive it ſelfe of welfare and happineſſe; yea, as one wave followeth another, ſo doth one cavill back another, and all to deprive it ſelfe of any bleſſing which is fairly toward it. And how manifold arguments one upon the neck of another, it can invent and deviſe of all ſorts, to ſtrengthen it ſelfe in her owne once conceited error? Rather then *Naaman* here will ſeeme to ſhrinke one jot from his former hold, marke what cavils he deviſes againſt the way of God, and his owne welfare: ſo peremptory, ſo reſolute, ſo witty and wiſe hee is to doe himſelfe hurt! but as for doing himſelfe any good, to gueſſe at any intention of God, or the Prophet in this thing, or to call himſelfe off from his humour, to more adviſed thoughts, we ſee it is farre from him. So true it is (not only in Heathens) My people are wiſe for evill, both to doe and to defend it; but for good, exceeding ſilly and ſorry. For why? Not onely it is our lot to be deprived of God, and all his goodneſſe, but alſo wee are depraved in all our abilities and powers of ſoule and body, from coveting any recovery of it; yea more, wee bend all the force of our underſtandings, judgements, memories, wills and affections, to the riveting and eſtabliſhing of our ſpirits in that dangerous eſtate in which we are: There is not a drop or dram of any propenſity in us, to uſe any faculty of reaſon in us, to any other end or purpoſe, ſave to overthrow our ſelves, and to implunge our ſelves more deeply in our owne evill: But to dreame of any out-gate of miſery, or to harpe upon any ſtring of invention, art or device how to breake the ſnare and get out, it is a gift which is denied us, ſo farre as unregenerate. A ſigne moſt evident, in how well pleaſing a frame and ſtreame wee conceive our ſelves to bee, when as all our wiſe-

Corruption is full of trickes and devices to hurt it ſelfe.

See Jer.4.22. Reaſon of it.

dome

dome ſerves for nothing elſe, ſave to deviſe reaſons to hold us; yea, wedge us ſtill more deſperately in our unhappy condition: and to wrangle againſt whatſoever might whiſper or ſound toward the fetching us out of that thraldome. Aske but a man whom God hath overpoized and perſwaded by the Spirit of grace, and he will tell you, through how infinite many cavils, objections and diſſwaſives of fleſh, the Lord hath brought him to the condition wherein he now ſtands: and, ere hee could ever feele the ſtreame of his ſpirit framed for God, and the embracing of the meſſage of ſalvation. 2 Kings

How many thouſand feares, doubts, carnall exceptions are there in a corrupt heart agai ſt either the t uth in generall, or ſuch or ſuch truths of promiſes in ſpeciall, or the ſimplicity of their meaning to himſelfe perſonally? As it is ſaid of *Peter*, that the Angell gave him a bunch on the to-ſide, and then his chaines fell off, and then hee groped for his Cloake and Sandals, and then the priſon gates flew open for him to paſſe through, and then he was carried to the outward gate, and the inner gate (yron doores) & till this he was not ſet at freedome, nor awakened to ſee himſelfe delivered. So doth the Lord bring his through manifold obſtacles, objections, temptations, and the whole Army of corrupt Arguments, which both within and without beſet the ſoule againſt the naked truth of the promiſe, before ever he ſet them at liberty. Acts 12.

And the truth is, onely the worke of regeneration is able, both to drein away this ſpring and floud of contradiction, and to dry up her ſtreames, that they may not ſo abundantly flow out to beare downe all the force of truth in us, or perſwade us to converſion. And the ſame ſpirit it muſt be which muſt turne our ſtreame to run another way, and take off this rolling doore of our corruption, from the old hinges, to open and move a contrary way.

Onely Grace muſt conſume all our baſe inventions which man hath found out againſt God: as, That this Sect of Religion is everywhere evill ſpoken of: If once a Chriſtian, ever a ſlave, a beggar, a foole: Theſe Preachers tell us many tales of a tub, againſt ſinne, and of the judgements of God; but the beſt is, wee ſee not thunder and lightning to follow upon every word they ſpeake. If all were ſo curſed whom they declaim againſt, they would looke as blacke as ſoot, there would bee no living among men: but (thankes be to God) we ſee all things ſtill continue as they were, and men are as white in the face as they were wont: buy and ſell, goe to markets and faires, to Ale-houſes and merry meetings, their pleaſures and good fellowſhips as free and faſt as ever. Therefore we ſee they would but rob us of our liberties, and make us ſuch fools as themſelves, which God forbid, & it were pitty that for their pleaſures the world ſhould be ſo turned topſie-turvie. Others come in and backe themſelves with this, That your beſt Preachers are no better then they ſhould be: and in corners they are as other men. Some thinke, if religion once beare ſway, then their trades muſt be forſaken, they muſt ſell all and give it to good folke, and Preachers: (not unlike to the Popiſh Jeſuites, who in their Sermons tell the people, that Engliſh Proteſtants have long tailes, and hornes in their foreheads, and looke as grizely as Ghoſts, and ſome grinne like Dogges, and the like.) Againe, others cavill

Eccleſ. 7. 29.

Cavils againſt Religion: ſundry of them named.

1

2

3

4

5

6

2 Kings 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

vill & say, These Christians are so sad and melancholick, that I am afraid I should die of no other disease, save of very thought and care. Others come neerer, and consider, God would have their lusts and lewd qualities from them, which are necessary evils to them, they cannot part with them: Religion is better to make shew of for mens ease, (as *Machiavil* said) then to make us sound at heart, and so cost us much paine. Others cavill and say, The best cannot tell whether they shall be saved: and they can hope as well as others; and so, hope well and have well. Others thinke it impossible to change their natures and to be converted. They have assayed often, but they finde little come of it; and they love no worke which is never at an end, nor then neither. They love that religion which a man can tell what to make of, and come to a point: but as for that which is never content, but first men must forgoe their lusts, then their liberties, then themselves, beleeve, repent, and bee broken-hearted; this is precise and curious, not for their tooth. Others say, If yee heare the Preacher, yee will lose your wits, and drowne or fore-doe your selves. Others yet come closer, and cavill thus, Wee see the more we are terrified for sinne, the further we are from God. God hath not appointed all to bee saved: all cannot mourne or beleeve, it is the gift of few, we know not whom God hath chosen: men may fall away after they have beleeved; and (if some say true) the justified may revolt and be damned; and they can be no worse, though they never begin: Many goe so farre as few can match them, and yet for one cause or other, they must prove hypocrites and lose their labour; therefore they will save theirs altogether: they had as good fit for nought as toyle for nought. Others say, their corruptions doe so weary them, that they shall never get through them: and others are afraid that they shall never persevere, but (at one time or other) fall foully, and dishonour their Religion: therefore dare not give the on-set. To conclude, others have taken offence at the rigour of the Law, and so run out to seek old liberties, alledging that bondage to be most irksome. And others who proceed further, yet say, This and such like doctrines of Selfe, doe discourage them: they feare that a man cannot be rid of it, and they see it is hard even for the best, to discerne the Spirit of God from a mans owne. Endlesse it were to reckon up all cavils; onely the Lord must change the heart ere it be rid of these her inventions.

To dispute for God, is a great work of grace.

And much more must the Lord turne the streame a contrary way, ere the soule wax resolute against all such objections: and bee turned to dispute for God, to hold close to the promise, and to devise as many, as strong, and as witty reasons for her owne salvation, as before shee did against it.

Some instances of disputing for God.

To argue thus is not common: The Lord hath his number, and will ever have: and they are such as (leaving his secrets) cleave to his revealed will. Such as are loaden with their corruptions, mourne after ease; not for ease onely of their feare and guilt: but to take the yoke of Christ upon them in stead thereof: Such (if any) may claime the promise: And such an one (through mercy) I am. Few indeed shall be saved; but then as few lament after God till they finde him: and many glorious lights fall away; but then their light was in themselves, they were not humble.

humble. True it is, the elect are knowne to God: but yet ſuch as will firſt beleeve, ſhall in time know themſelves to bee elect. And why ſhould I thinke my inducements to beleeve to bee ſo weake or few? Nay rather, why ſhould not I, (if I be lead by the Spirit of Grace) turne diſſwaſives into perſwaſives, and ſway all objections to the naked promiſe? Surely *Caleb* did ſo. And Gods reaſons are many and ſtrong. Mee thinkes it is a ſtrong motive, that the Lord will leave none, but ſuch as forſake him firſt: His meaning ſeemes very cordiall unto me, when he bids a ſinner be reconciled. For why? There is bottomeleſſe patience in his heart to forbeare ſmiting; hee hath mercy cut off his owne plea: he hath neglected no meanes to ſatisfie his owne juſtice; hee that would not refuſe to forgoe his onely ſonne, will not loſe his coſt, ſurely he meanes well to a poore wretch. He hath received a ranſome, declares himſelfe to be appeaſed, wiſhes us to be ſo; threatens us if wee refuſe: His Spirit is annexed to his offer: he allureth draweth, encourageth; and yet he urgeth nothing at our hands, but himſelfe promiſeth ſtrength to performe; he can and will ſubdue the hardneſſe of an unwilling heart, by an irreſtible prayer; he promiſes to rebuke Satans ſubtilty and malice, to doe all our workes. It is his owne glory which he ſeekes, why ſhould he loſe it? And why ſhould he doe that which he hath done, except he meant to perfect it? Num. 14.5. 6.

I ſay thus to argue in truth, is not every ones meaſure, but theirs onely to whom it is given, to anſwer ſtrong doubts, and to quench fiery darts: To ſay with *Mano'as* wife, we ſhall not dye; if the Lord had meant to ſlay us, he would never have ſo farre have declared himſelfe to us, as he hath done. To ſay with that rare patterne, yet Lord the dogges may eate crummes &c. ſo anſwering the objections of her Saviour againſt her: To ſay with *Iob*, though thou kill me, yet will I truſt in thee againſt all the terrors with which thou affrighteſt me: I ſay, it is the Lord who only can turn the heart to be wiſe to ſalvation: And to be ſure, as it ſhould humble all ſuch cavillers, (who are alway proudeſt of that wit which damps them moſt) as feele this nature unſubdued in them, ſo it ſhould raiſe up a ſpeciall ſpirit of thankefulneſſe in all them, whom God hath pluckt out of all ſuch ſnares, cauſing them to turne their Satyrs into ſongs; and their invectives into admirations: and to bleſſe him, who hath put their ſoules out of thoſe queſtions, which (if they were now to reſolve) the greateſt queſtion would be, whether ever they would be reſolved. This I have briefly ſaid of this point generally; whereof much more might have beene ſaid, ſave that my text pitches my thoughts upon the ſpeciall cavill of *Naamans* carnall reaſon; unto which I haſten, hoping that in this inſtance I ſhall ſatisfie them, who are deſirous to heare more of the generall. Judg. 13.23. Matth. 15.

Doct. 2. Carnall reaſon a great enemy to faith.

The ſecond point then out of this anſwer of *Naaman* is this: That carnall reaſon is a great enemy to the ſoule, in point of aſſenting and cleaving to the truths of the word. So it was here to *Naaman*, and ſo it is to all, who leane thereto. For the better conceiving of which point, firſt in a word, I will ſhew what I meane by carnall reaſon, what ſorts of men, and in how many reſpects and inſtances it reſiſts the word. Secondly, I will prove the point by Scripture and ſundry reaſons: And laſtly, come

2Kings

to the uſes, and therein anſwer one maine queſtion, how farre forth mans wiſedome may be admitted to have any thing to doe in the matters of God. For the firſt, by carnall reaſon, I meane not the power of reaſoning according to rationall and ſenſible grounds; nor yet the exerciſe of that power, in ſuch things as are objects of reaſon, I meane humane matters, which ſenſe can judge of. For to deny ſuch things, were to make men meere idiots, and to diſable them from capableneſſe of Religion: But I meane that carnallity of reaſon, which judges and diſputes according to ſinfull, corrupt and depraved reaſon, and calls Gods holy and myſticall truthes, (which are onely judged of by a ſuperior power of ſpirituall reaſon and underſtanding) to the barre or ballance of an unregenerate, that is an inferior and diſabled reaſon and judgement, which hath loſt the the gift of diſcerning truthes, by the error and corruption of old *Adam*. Now this erroneous judgement hath three ſteppes and degrees: For firſt, carnall reaſon buyes and ſells God and his actions according to the meere proportion and ſcantling of outward appearance, and weighes him ſo juſt in her ballances, that ſhe will abate him no one dramme of weight in the reckning; but he muſt be juſt the ſame, not one haires bredth under or over, then ſhe allowes him. Thus the Iſraelites when they were in the wilderneſſe, becauſe they ſaw no reall ſecond cauſes or meanes, of a ſupply of meate and drinke, deny it poſſible that they ſhould be furniſhed at all, concluding that they muſt of neceſſity periſh. Can the Lord (ſay they) ſpread a table in the wilderneſſe? They would allow the Lord no more power, then the meere poſſible or probable meanes would afford. This is carnall reaſon in groſſe; ſomewhat like the groſſe condignity of Popiſh merit. This was *Naamans* reaſon here in the Text.

Carnall reaſon what.

See 1 Cor. 2. 15.

Three ſteppes of carnall reaſon.

1.

Pſal. 78. 19.

A ſecond ſteppe is, when although light out of the word, and common convincing experience dare not confine God ſo cloſe, nor girt up his power ſo narrowly, but hee muſt have a power beyond any thing which appeares; yet for all that, in ſecret ſhe thinkes it very meet, that God ſhould tye himſelfe and yeeld of himſelfe to worke by rationall and likely meanes; and when he doth ſo, ſhee is beſt ſatisfied, and ſtumbles when it is not ſo: Thus the Jewes thought it a very meete congruity that Chriſt ſhould heale his ſervant, who had built them a Synagogue, and loved their nation, as if Chriſt were tyed in doing miracles to gratifie his benefactors: and ſo his mother herſelfe, *Ioh.* 2.4. when ſhe ſaw they wanted wine, would needs foreſtall him, ſaying, Sonne thou canſt doe a miracle, and thou canſt not doe it at a better ſeaſon then now, to ſupply their want of wine; as if our Saviour ſerved onely to attend mens opportunities by the power of his Godhead! indeed hee did the miracle, but not upon either the ground or end which ſhe framed: This is a dreg of the former. The third ſteepe is, when we confeſſe God and his will and power above all, and confeſſe it muſt be hee onely which muſt worke all of himſelfe, and is above the meanes: but yet in the uſe of meanes we expect God ſhould not fruſtrate us, but worke by and through them; not remembring that as in the firſt, the Lord is tyed to no meanes: and in the ſecond, he is a free agent and is above all meanes: ſo in this third, he can worke aſwell without the meanes, and againſt them,

2.

Luke 7.4.5.

3

as

as with them: and uſeth meanes onely for other cauſes, not for his, but our better helpe and convenience. So that this baſe carnality plaies her priſes one way or other, and dares act her part upon Gods ſtage; ſo that no one myſtery, adminiſtration, worke or ordinance of his can paſſe her fingers, without ſome verduit or other of her owne, ſhe will have an oare in every boate.

In this firſt branch I would further have it conſidered, in what ſubjects or perſons I conceive this carnall reaſon to reſide, when I ſay, it is an ill judge, and a great enemy to the matters of God. I doe not here intend Atheiſticall reaſon, ſuch as that of the Epicurean ſect was, who thought the world to be eternall, both before and after, becauſe there could no reaſon be given how a workeman could atchieve it, or perfect it: where (ſay they) are his tooles, his leavers, his hammers for the nonce? Neither meane I the carnall reaſon of prophane *Eſau's* and libertines, whoſe belly, backe, pride and eaſe of the fleſh, wholly ſway them, and who have daſhed out that dimme light of morall or naturall notions left in our decayed nature (through the prevailing of their luſts:) but I meane them who ordinarily profeſſe Religion, whoſe knowledge of Religion added to their naturall light, doth curbe and over-rule in good meaſure the exceſſe of carnall reaſon in her groſſeneſſe: For why? Education, training up to knowledge, and obſerving of truthes taught in the word, will eaſily moderate the baſeneſſe of this carnality; though grace and ſanctification hath not yet ſubdued, either their mindes to the true ſenſe, or their hearts to the ſavor of Gods matters; as in the regenerate. Nay further, I would have all to conceive the doctrine in generall, as belonging to all carnall reaſon without exception, whereſoever it bee found; inſomuch, that the very godly themſelves, (ſo farre as unregenerate, and eſpecially Satan by infidelity tempting them) are carried this way dangerouſly: as thoſe many inſtances of Scripture of *Moſes*, of *Samuel*, of *Gedeon*, of *Sarah*, of others, witneſſe, who when they heard of, or went about Gods meſſages or matters, preſently they cavilled by carnall reaſon, ſaying, Should all the flocks of the mountaines, or heards of beaſts be ſlaine, to feed this people? Should *Sarah* at this age give ſuck? If the Lord be with us, why are theſe things upon us? Is not the Lords annointed (*Eliab*) before him? Meaning theſe things to reaſon ſeeme impoſſible, therefore they are ſo; or this or that ſeemes likely, therefore it is ſo: whereas (when they ſpeake as beleevers) they looke at another principle, thus or thus God will, or will not have it, therefore ſo it is and muſt be: God will and can doe this or that, therefore done it ſhall bee, whatſoever fleſh cavills to the contrary.

What ſubject carnall reaſon dwels in?

Even profeſſors of Religion.

Yea the godly themſelves in part.

1 Sam. 16. 6. Num. 20. 10. &c.

Ere I leave this firſt generall, I will adde ſome inſtances of Gods matters, wherein carnall reaſon prejudicateth and hindreth the ſoule from conceiving and beleeving: For although I might onely ſpeake in generall, and ſay, it hinders in all both morall (eſpecially if truly underſtood, as the hallowing of a Sabbath, the ruling of the thoughts and affections in ſecret) and eſpecially myſteries revealed in Chriſt: yet it will better ſatisfie the minde of you that heare (beloved) to name ſome ſpeciall branches, by which carnall reaſon may be gueſſed at in other kindes. The inſtances are theſe. Firſt, in matter of Religion and worſhip, and

1. Inſtance. Worſhip of God.

2 Kings

the ſpeciall wayes of God to us,as in commands,promiſes,threats, or our ſervice to him in ſelfe-deniall, faith,mortification,and the like. For religion and worſhip, how doth carnall reaſon judge? Surely, not according to the nature of it, which is a powerfull uniting of the ſoul to God, and reſtoring it to the integrity of nature according to creation: But it conceives confuſedly of it,as a due which the creature owes to God,that the inferior worſhip the ſuperior,never looking either at the right maner, or true ends thereof. And therefore, although it grant a worſhip, yet it judges of the frame thereof,according to the patern of corrupt reaſon, and thinkes that God is beſt pleaſed with a blindneſſe of devotion, a ſuperſtitious zeale, ſuch a worſhip as aſtoniſheth the ſenſe with ſome carnall abſtinences, rites, or ceremonies of mans deviſing, or ſome outward pompous rites, and glorious ſhewes of Pietie, in decking of Churches, in golden and ſilver ornaments, precious veſtments, coſtly Temples, and rich furniture: But as for ſpirit and truth of ſoule, attending the Lord purely in thoſe ordinances which himſelf hath invented, altogether ſenſeleſſe thereof. As we ſee in Popery at this day, to what point it hath brought the worſhip of God. That worſhip which bites not the Spirit,is moſt ſpecious to the eye, working upon the carnall part, and putting it in hope that God will bee as well pleaſed with her ſervice, as ſhe her ſelfe is, that agrees beſt with carnall reaſon. That preachers ſpeake ſmooth, quaint,pleaſing things,tickle the eare, diſpleaſe not corruption: That the Sermon be ſhort,and of quicke diſpatch,that we cope all our Sabbath devotion,yea all our religion within the Church walls, and ſavour little of it within our owne houſes, callings and government; but live by compariſon of our ſelves with the prophane, who care for no worſhip at all: this pleaſes fleſh-alife.

For Commands.

So for Commands: ſo farre as they goe in reaſons ſtreame, as to live and be painfull in our callings, to beware of bringing our names into diſcredit by lewd company, drinking, ſwearing,and pot-companionſhip, to keep our ſtate from decay,to be no ſpend-thrifts, and ſo become burdenſome to our friends,or the Towne. Theſe and the like commands, becauſe they borrow authority from carnall inconveniences, pleaſe carnall reaſon well: But to obey in ſuffering as well as doing, with the loſſe of credit,eſtate, life; to truſt God in all theſe, and live by faith, that God will ſupport us in our endevours,this is fooliſhneſſe to carnall reaſon. A man who ſuffers for the ſafeguard of his conſcience, ſeemes a ſtark foole to a worldling. Tuſh (ſay men) hee may thanke himſelfe, this needed not to betide him. So in the matter of promiſes, carnall reaſon loves to heare that men ſhall fare well for their truſting God, and obeying him: But how? They ſavour no ſpiritualneſſe in a promiſe: So their Cow may not caſt her Calfe, ſo their bellies may bee filled with the treaſure hidden in the earth, enjoying the bleſſing and influence of the Sunne, Moone,and heavens, that they may abound in Corne, and Wine, and Oyle, and feele no lack in their health,bodies,names,children: ſo long, I ſay,they are for promiſes: They can alledge, that God hath promiſed no more to drowne the world: That Summer, harveſt, ſeed time and harveſt ſhall continue,theſe they lot upon,and ſnatch at: but as for the promiſe to eaſe a loaden ſoule, to reſtore to it life and immortality

Matth.16.20.

For Promiſes.

Pſal.17.

Deut. 33.

Gen 8.22.

by

by the Goſpel: This and the like are gibbridge to them: He that ſhould preſſe them to get the favour of him that dwelt in the buſh, were as one that told them a tale of a tub, or ſpake in Hebrew and Greeke unto them. So I may ſay of Gods threats: Perhaps in terrible thunder and lightning they wil run into a hole: But they behold no power nor Majeſty of a juſt and revenging God in any of them. For why? Thier ſinne lies deeply bundled up in them, in the bottome of a deluded and ſecure conſcience; and therefore they feare nothing, they are ſetled upon their dregges and a rotten peace; but as for the inſtrument whom God uſeth to denounce threats, him they flye upon, out-face, and beare downe with a ſtout heart, thinking him to ſpeake out of ill will, ſpite and hatred; as *Iezabel* conceived *Iehu* to be a traytor like *Zimri*, and further ſhee looked not. But if the threats of God be ſo terrible, that they pierce, or bring ſome reall judgement after them, then the beſt fruit is, ſome bodily abaſement and bowing like a bul-ruſh; no meeting of God, nor preparing to meet him with true contrition and faith: and ſo the threat ſtill hangs upon record, and is not prevented, as we ſee in *Ahab* his caſe.

Deut. 33. 16.

2 King. 10.

I have been too long in this inſtance, I muſt bee briefer in the reſt. A ſecond then may bee, in the providence and adminiſtrations of God: wherein the judgement of carnall reaſon is this, That if the morall and vertuous be bleſſed, and fare well, and the vitious be puniſhed, if race be to the ſwift (as the wiſe man ſpeakes) and battell to the ſtrong, and wealth to the provident, and poverty to ſuch as ſtruggle not for the world, if the good live long, and the bad be ſoone diſpatcht; then they feele their bloud to run right in their veines, God is alive, and judgeth the earth: But if God vary from their courſe, and they meet with darkneſſe and diſproportion, that Princes goe on foot like Lackies, and Peſants ride on horſebacke & be exalted, if the righteous *Abel* periſh in his righteouſnes, and *Cain* prolong his dayes, if the malicious proſper as a greene Bay tree, and the like: Oh! then God is not ſo wiſe as hee might be, here they are puzzled, and at a non-plus, they fall and breake their ſhins at this threſhold: then they cavill, and thinke they may juſtly chalenge him; nay more, they thinke with them in the Prophet, they have ſerved God in vaine, and waſht their hands in innocencie to little purpoſe: for the bad are at as good termes with God as the good, and ſo they wax careleſſe, prophane, diſtruſtfull and diſſolute, as if there were no God. Alas! great reaſon, for the myſtery of Providence is a riddle to ſuch.

2 Inſtance. Adminiſtrations of God.

Eccleſ. 9. 11.

Eccleſ. 7.

Pſal. 73.

Mal. 3.

A third inſtance may be in Croſſes which God diſpenſeth ſpiritually, and to his owne ends, not carnally: neither will he give account to man of all his matters. But carnall reaſon will preſcribe and limit him in this kind. When ſhe beholds croſſes to befall any, ſhee goes downe right in her judgement, and concludes, either that there is nothing to bee made of them. They come upon all alike; and (as *David* told *Ioab*) the ſword devoures all alike: or elſe, they cenſure ſuch as are afflicted, as the world did Chriſt, Eſay 53. as a man afflicted of God, and humbled for his deſerts. Thus the Jewes deemed thoſe upon whom the Tower of Siloam fell, and thoſe whoſe bloud *Pilat* mingled with their Sacrifices, to bee greater ſinners then others. And ſo, if any live at hearts eaſe, merry, and without any bonds in their lives, and goe downe in peace to the pit, theſe

3 Inſtance. Providence. Job 33. 13.

2 Sam. 21. Eccleſ. 9. 2. Eſai 53. 9.

Luke 13 3. 4. 5

2 Kings

they esteeme favorites of heaven. Thus the Papists at this day measure the Church of Christ, by the marke of prosperity, and successe, and succession. As dead fish goe alway downe the streame, so doe these men; whereas Gods living fish can swimme against it, and discerne the love of a father by chastisements, arguing by spirituall reason.

Psal 17.13. Simil.

A fourth instance may be, about the persons of men, and their difference: Carnall reason esteeming the man, not by that which is pretious in him, and to be desired, which is his goodnesse (as *Salomon* speaks) and whereby he is more excellent then his neighbour: But either they slight goodnesse wholly in a man, preferring wealth and honor before it; or if necessity put honour upon some for their shining graces, yet they will looke more upon some outward respect, (as those in Saint *Iames* lookt at the gold rings and rich attire) and set their marke upon a Christian for his outward accomplishments, as if his learning, sweetnesse of nature, curtesie, usefulnesse, esteem with great ones, seem to equall his Religion, they especially honour him for the by, more then the maine: whereas a spirituall man discernes a secret worth within, which no poverty or outward defects can staine.

4. Instan. Persons of men. Proverb.

Jam.2.2.3.4.

A fifth instance may be about the actions of men: And these carnall reason proportions according to sense, and thinks as those Jewes who stumbled at the workes of Christ, and when they could not deny them to be miraculous, yet seeing no state or birth, education, or learning in him, they thought them too good for so mean an one to do; and were offended in him: For why? He was but the sonne of *Mary* and *Ioseph* the Carpenter, and bred among them. If hee had come from a coast unknowne, or had beene bred up among Pharisees, they could have magnified him. So when a valiant Captaine attaines great victories, carnall reason wonders not, because there is a proportion: But for Rams hornes and pitchers to beate downe walls and armies, it is favourlesse to them. And so againe, that which agrees to the custome of the time, and the course of the multitude, passes for currant with such; but that which they see but few doe, they suspect as singular and schismaticall; for they stand not to the barre of the word, but the world: As *Gallio* looked at law, and common right betweene man and man, but abhorred all Religion as faction, so these: open and noted offenders they shunne to be, but closely to be false, to lye, to doe a man mischiefe, to be unchaste, to do evill for evill; they thinke these no disgrace; they feare men, and the losse of their favour and repute, they feare no censure of Gods eie; to quite themselves of their enemies, as well as they can, put up no wrongs, to be angry when they are provoked, to strike in anger, to love friends, and hate enemies, this they thinke beseems them.

5. Instan. Actions of men. Joh.7.27. Joh. 9.24.29.

Josh. 6.

Act.18.14.

A sixth instance may be, the mysteries of faith and regeneration; which carnall reason examines by her owne scantling. Thus Papists conceive it an unlikelyer thing, that a man should be justified by a righteousnesse really out of himselfe, and in another, (as a man to be made rich with the supposed imputation of another mans wealth put upon him) rather then a righteousnesse inherent in him: It seemes absurd to carnall reason, that the detracting and renouncing of that we have, should please God more then that which we adde to our owne, keeping our own

6. Instan. Mysteries of faith and repentance.

stock

ſtock ſtill: It is unſavoury to ſuch, to heare that cleaving to a promiſe, ſhould be of greater account with God, or the deniall of our owne beſt duties and devotions, then outward reall forbearances of ſin, abſtinence from liberties, or ſervices of Religion: carnall reaſon ſaith, ſo much as thou eſteemeſt thy ſelfe, others will.

7. Inſtan. Lawfull liberties.

Seventhly, let us ſee what carnall liberty judges of lawfull liberties: Surely thus: She puts no difference betweene the one and the other, thinking all to be lawfull to them at all times, in any meaſure, with any circumſtances, without reſpect of offence or expediency: nay rather ſuch liberties, games, paſtimes, they count lawfull, as their carnall ſway leads them to, except ſome great let hinder them; they looke neither at rules, nor ends, but thinke all ſerve for mans content, and can goe as well from one as other, to their devotions; ſobriety and mediocrity they regard not.

8. Inſtan. Converſation with men.

And laſtly, for their common converſe with men in buying, ſelling, eating, drinking, and other paſſages of life and converſation, carnall reaſon either thinkes them quite beſides the bounds of Religion at all, or elſe goeth to worke by no rule in them; but conceives in theſe, each man left to himſelfe without any controll; their tongues, their paſſions, their trades, and all their civill dealings, they count arbitrary matters, and ſo that they be not debauched in any notorious kinde, as in oppreſſing, wronging, or foule exceſſes; they ſuppoſe it is free for every man to get what he can, to ſhift for himſelfe, and to ſeeke for the beſt gaine, who ſhall be jollieſt, braveſt, and live at the beſt tearmes for the fleſh. This be ſpoken for the firſt generall, to ſhew what this taint of carnall reaſon is, how bad and incompetent a judge it is in Gods matters, foreſtalling the ſoule from cleaving to his truthes. As the oile in the hand cannot be hidden; ſo it is eaſie to diſcover the nature and behaviour of this humor: as ſhe told *Peter*, ſo I may ſay to every rationall and carnall man, thy very ſpeech, thy garbe, and outſide, bewray thee what thou art; for thou wilt have one finger in each of Gods diſhes, his word, ſacraments, or whatſoever. Matth 26.73.

Proofes of the doctrine.

I come now to the ſecond generall; to prove the point by ſome texts both of truth and examples, and then by reaſons. For the former, note that 1 *Cor.* 2.14. The carnall man favors not the things of God; for they are ſpiritually diſcerned: Such as the man is ſuch is his reaſon. And againe, The wiſdome of the fleſh, is enmity with God: It is not ſubject to Gods matters, neither indeed can bee. They that are after the fleſh minde the things of it: And to be carnally minded is death: and ſo many more might be added. So for examples, the Scripture is full of them, both of groſſer and finer ſpunne ſtuffe in this kinde. When our Saviour, *Iob.* 3.5.4. diſcourſed to *Nicodemus* of being borne againe, what ſaid he? Shall a man then goe againe into his mothers wombe, and be born a ſecond time? And yet what a great Doctor of Iſrael was he? His great Maſterſhip could read no lecture againſt carnall reaſon. So againe, read the example of the people which came to chuſe *Saul* King; when they ſaw what he was for meane breed and parentage, the text tells us, they deſpiſed him, Shall ſuch an one reigne over us? Can hee ſave us? So the Prince whoſe arme the King leaned on, when he heard the promiſe 1 Sam. 10.27.

2 Kings

2 King. 7. 3. 4.

Joh. 7. 27.

2 Cor. 4. & 5 chap.

1. Cor. 3. 4.

See Texts before.

Reaſon 1. Soule bereft of the puritie of reaſon in her firſt creation.

Reaſon 2. Baſe cuſtome hath marred right reaſon.

miſe of God, that within one day the famine ſhould be turned to plenty, made this anſwer, If there were windowes made in heaven, could this be? I will never beleeve it! It repugnes to ſenſe and the preſent ſtate of things. So thoſe Jewes, who ſaw and heard our Saviour preach, and doe miracles, deſpiſed him, Shall this man ſave us? When the Meſſia comes, no man ſhall know whence he is: But as for this man, we know him, and whence he is, a poore man, *Ioſeph* and *Maries* ſonne, of no breed, training, or outward glee to the world-ward. So thoſe falſe teachers (of whom *Paul* writes in all his Epiſtles) were carnall ones, and led by the reaſon of the fleſh, deſpiſed *Paul* for his meane preaching without eloquence, and for his meane preſence and perſon, being (as it ſeemes) to outward appearance, of no great ſtature, nor glorious utterance. And thoſe Corinthians (although not ſo deeply tainted) yet had a dregge of this poyſon, when they eſteemed of Preachers according to the fancie of the man: ſome would cleave to *Paul*, ſome to *Cephas*, ſome to *Apollo*, ſome to others, as their humour led them. Who cannot by theſe examples perceive, what an ill judge carnall reaſon is in cleaving to the truths of the word? As *Naaman* here was held from Gods purpoſe to heale him, by his Abana and Pharfar: ſo each of theſe examples were hindred from embracing one truth or other, by the obſtacle of their owne reaſon.

Nay, the Scripture reſts not here alone, but brings in the Saints themſelves (with infamy) for their being fore-ſtalled againſt the truth hereby. *Moſes* is taxed for diſtruſting God at the waters of Meriba: *Gideon* for cavilling againſt the Angels meſſage, *Samuel* for inclining to *Eliab*, *Sara* for laughing (which I named before) all of them being letted by this enemy, from cleaving to the truth, becauſe they felt nothing within to favour it, carnall reaſon foiſting in this cavill: Tuſh! What likelihood or proportion is there between this truth and thee? Thou give ſucke, and bee a Nurſe at ninety yeares old, and ſo of the reſt. So much for proofes.

Reaſons follow: Firſt, the ſoul is ſtript and bereft, by the ſin of *Adam*, from that holy purity of Reaſon, whereby it could conceive, digeſt, and underſtand the matters of God, as their proper object (without miſtake or errours) as the eye or eare can diſcerne colours, or ſounds. This holy power of created nature, is now turned to a meere privation; ſinking paper being as able to containe the diſtinct impreſſion of the letters written thereon, as corrupt reaſon can diſtinguiſh or diſcerne the ſtampe or notions of holy things. It cannot reach them: for it faileth as the ſhort arme of an infant cannot reach a thing above it, it cannot retain them, for it vaniſheth in them as ſenſe doth in dreaming. They are above the capacity of the ſoule (as ſhe is) even as Hebrew is above the reach of an ideot: no man wonders that he rejects it with indignation, as exceeding his faculty: Gods matters are reached by a ſuperiour power to that which a naturall man hath: as a tale told is reacht by a faculty above that which the beaſt hath. The ſubſtance of the underſtanding is as it was; but the excellencie of her faculty is loſt.

Reaſ 2. By baſe and lewd cuſtome, it hath contracted an habit of a contrary quality, which is ſapleſneſſe and unſavourineſſe of minde, which ſhe gathers up in the world, by the baſe cuſtomes of it, ſeene and heard: and

and ſo lickes up ſcurfe, as the Spider doth venom, or the ſinke gathers dregges daily. Falſe prejudices and miſperſwaſions are imbred in the ſoule by this meanes: I ſay, by the error of the wicked, thoſe falſe opinions which the common multitude have taken up, & put on as a garment, againſt Gods cleare truth. Theſe are carried from hand to hand, as wares in a market, by Traders and Chapmen: and they wax more defiled by the carrying: For why? Principles of truth being naturally loathed and abhorred by men of corrupt and perverſe mindes and will, they muſe as they uſe, they report them as they like them, and ſo breed in each others mindes hatefull thoughts and conceits of them, as of God himſelfe and his Attributes, Religion, and all the myſteries of it, the lovers of it, the power and practiſe, the adminiſtrations of God, his worſhip and ordinances. As Hemlocke or Cockle ſeed multiplieth by ſhedding on the ground; ſo the Dice-play of men, as *Paul* calles it, *Eph.* 3. doth infect the degenerate world, and increaſeth, till as a leaven it hath ſowred it through, and feſtred it to the heart as a canker. As a leafe of paper all over written on both ſides, neere and cloſe, admits nothing elſe to bee written in it, without confuſion: ſo the minds of worldlings being wholly poſſeſſed with the ſcurfe of lewd opinions in theſe matters, admit no interlinings of truth, but abide erroneous. It is ſaid by *Matthew*, that it was given out by the Scribes and Elders, that Chriſt roſe not againe, but was ſtollen away by his Diſciples: and that error paſſeth for currant to this day. So do errors in Gods matters root & ſettle among the ignorant and unſtable. The ſtrength of falſe principles, which corrupt time hath raked on heapes, to harden her ſelfe againſt the puritie of Truth, are as thoſe Inchanters were to *Pharaoh*, and as *Elimas* to *Sergius Paulus*, to avert them, and detaine them. Cuſtome makes errour to bee thought truth, fore-ſtalles it, and takes up the roome of it, ſo that it can ſubſiſt no where.

Mat. 28. end.

Acts 13. 8. Exod. 7. 11. 12.

Reaſon 3. The ſoule thus doubly infected, is chained by Satan with her owne bands, inſomuch that as he entred into *Iudas* by the ſop, ſo doth he into the ſoule by both theſe traytors. And being entred, imbarkes himſelfe more ſtrongly againſt the evidence of all divine truth, infuſing his errors and lies into the ſoule, as firſt he did into *Eve*, when hee drew her from the ſimplicity of obedience. He enlarges carnall reaſon exceedingly, and puts into the ſoule moſt unſanctified and erroneous thoughts againſt all truth and ſavour of goodneſſe. Hee puffes up the minde with conceitedneſſe and pride, ſetting her up with him in his throne: ſo that ſhe becomes wiſer in her owne opinion, as *Tyrus* in *Ezek.* then *Daniel*, yea then ſeven men who can give a reaſon; ſo that ſhee waxes impudent and refractory in her owne way, ſo that there is more hope of a fool then of her. Oh! (ſaith Satan) thou maiſt well ſtand upon it: for thou art counted a jolly wiſe fellow indeed, worth ten of theſe poore Puritans, pitty that an hundred of ſuch ſhould beare downe ſuch an one as thou. Oh! this addes drunkenneſſe to thirſt, and makes folly mad, ſo that as the Adder, ſhe ſtops both eares againſt the charme of truth (be it never ſo powerfull) through pride and prejudice.

Reaſon 3. Satan rules ſtrongly in the ſoul by carnall reaſon.

Exod. 28. 3. As hee falſly, ſo here truly, Much carnall reaſon makes thee mad.

Reaſon 4. Laſtly, the Lord leaves all ſuch to Satans blind-folding, and to their owne perverſneſſe, whereby they are ſealed up to their deluſions; becauſe

Reaſon 4. The Lord infatuates carnal men juſtly.

1 Kings

becauſe they hardned themſelves againſt the naked truth, would not beleeve it, nor yeeld up this ſtrong fort of carnall reaſon, to the obedience of Chriſt, the Lord ſuffers them to be led captives to their owne erroneouſneſſe, denies them grace to looke in, and reflect upon themſelves, to ſee by what an unſound principle they are led, yea carried to hell: and ſome are juſtly given up from a carnall ſenſe to a reprobate ſenſe, that they pride themſelves in their ſhame, ridiculous unſavorineſſe, and curſed miſpriſions of truth; ſo that the corruption of carnall reaſon grows from an error, to a confirmed diſeaſe, and to an habit of wilfulneſſe, and rare it is to ſee ſuch ſubdued and captivated to the obedience of Chriſt. In all theſe foure reſpects, it appeares to be no wonder, that carnall reaſon ſhould hold off the ſoule from cleaving to the truth, or judging aright of the matters of God. So much for reaſons. I come to the uſe.

Vſe 1. Examination. Conviction of carnall reaſon by many particulars.

And firſt, this ſhould be uſe of examination to all ſorts, to try themſelves about this taint and corruption of carnall reaſon. Ere I proceed to any more uſes of either admonition, comfort, terror or inſtruction, let this be weighed, that it may appeare who are the parties of whom I ſpeake. I have ſaid enough before in thoſe inſtances which I named, and need adde no more: yet becauſe the matter is weighty, take two or three more, and goe to work narrowly, for no diſeaſe is ſo dangerous, ſo incurable: If God would lend us his heifer to plow withall, or cauſe us to reflect our own corruption upon our ſelves, how happy were it? Perhaps by this meanes God might pluck off this cover of darkeneſſe from our faces! Try thy ſelfe by this firſt, *viz.* Thy naturall carnality and ſavor: Thou knoweſt what it is, not to ſavor and reliſh meate and drinke in a deepe cold; what it is to love or not to ſavor this or that diſh of meate: The ſelfe ſame diſcover in Gods matters: Canſt thou reliſh a bargaine, a game at cardes and dice, any baſe talke of the world, (though never ſo long) any idle tale, or gigge of a geering, gibing wit, or any merry conceit and diſcourſe, or matters of the belly, backe, purſe and commodity; I ſay, canſt thou judge perfectly how theſe taſte? But if thou come into a religious company, where there is ſpeech of a promiſe, of faith, the ſacraments, any myſtery of Religion, any commands or threats of God, then thou feeleſt that the ſavor of theſe is as the taſte of the white of an egge without ſalt: It is a wofull ſigne of a carnall wretch, that hath no ſalt of God in his Spirit to ſeaſon him, but is ſtill ſapleſſe and dry, infatuate and unſavory: Thou haſt loſt the comprehenſion and ſavor of God, and art as a veſſel without a bottome; thou canſt not endure the talke of ſuch things, they are an offence unto thee: There is a peece of the Jew and Gentile in thee as yet, Gods matters are a ſtumblingblocke and fooliſhneſſe unto thee; and thou art as yrkeſome and fulſome a creature to the appetite of God and good men, as a potion is to a ſicke ſtomack. Try thy ſelfe I ſay, by thy taking up the cuſtomary errors and ſpeeches of worldlings, as thus; what make yee of this preciſeneſſe? What? Thinke ye there was no Religion in the world, ere theſe ſingular fellows came up? What? Will not indifferency and reaſon ſerve men, to bee honeſt and no medlers, to pay all men their due as quiet folke ſhould doe, but men muſt peſter the world with ſo much zeale! As for theſe Preachers what are they? Meane fellowes, ſuch as the world might want,

1. Inſtance. Naturall ſavour.

Eſay 25.

Carnall reaſon deſcribed by the ſavour thereof.

Marke 9. 50. Luke 14. ult.

1 Cor. 1. 20. Matth. 16. 21.

want, yet ſubſiſt; few of them have any learning, and they are bad for a common-wealth: And as for theſe yong hotſpurres let them alone but a little, and by that time, they have wife and children, to look to, and feel what the hard world is, we ſhall have the wind in another doore: then they will be leſſe in their heate, and fall to their buſineſſe, as other men. By my faith and truth, or as God mend me, I love Religion well, ſo that too much of it make not men mad; I would I were dead or hangd if I love not an honeſt man with my heart, ſo it be with reaſon! Ah! thou ſapleſſe and barren wretch, thy language of Aſhdod betraies thee, and that exceeding emptineſſe of good, utters it ſelfe in thy very ſpeech and carriage! thou art weighed and found light.

2. Inſtan. Proteſtant common favour.

Secondly, try thy ſelf by thy Proteſtant carnality, which is an addition of ſome divine light to the dim light of nature, whereby carnall reaſon is ſomewhat alaied and abated, but yet the old principle abides ſtill, and Religion prevailes no further then carnall reaſon will admit. Try thy ſelfe about this alſo: Doſt thou drive two trades, a ſpirituall and a carnall? Doſt thou heare, pray, receive, and profeſſe, with thy carnall favor and ſent ſtill unpurged? So farre as thy wealth, credit, mony, pleaſures, and worldly appetite will ſuffer, ſo farre thou wilt be Religious, upon condition thou maieſt loſe nothing by Religion, but keepe the bredth of carnall jollity, eaſe and content ſtill, nouriſh thy old thoughts and affections cloſe, ſanctifie a reſt upon the Sabbath, ſo farre as will ſtand with thy buſineſſe, taking mony, hireing workemen, paying rates, debts, and recknings; maintaine ſo much Religion as will keep thee from open prophaneneſſe, but as for conſcience, alas! there is little, thou wouldeſt pleaſe a carnall husband, wife, friend, rather then God, and loſe thy repute with God, rather then thine eaſe, credit, living and maintenance in the world, and yet thinke thy ſelfe to have as good an heart to God as the cloſeſt worſhipper in ſpirit and truth? To equivocate with thine owne conſcience, to flatter, to lye, to cog, and play the timeſerver, thou careſt not, ſo it make for thine ends; and yet Religion ſhall be the ſtalking-horſe all the while, and that ſhall be the ſoder for all cracks: examine thy ſelfe; is this thy condition? Then is thy ſtate as bad as the former, and in this reſpect worſe, becauſe thou art a ſubtill hypocrite, further from ſincerity, then a downe-right carnall perſon! thou art juſt of the temper of the times, and if a Religion of bowing to altars, to images and pictures of Saints, and our Lady, and the crucifix ſhould bee obtruded, or a worſhip of blinde devotion or Popiſh pompe, void of all ſap, lo, thou wert the man moſt like to imbrace it! For why? Since that a mediocrity beſt contents thee betweene Atheiſme and Preciſeneſſe, what were more like to agree with thy humour, then ſuch a medly?

3. Inſtan. Gods leaving of thee to the ſavour of the fleſh.

Nay thirdly, try thy ſelfe by this: Perhaps the Lord is ſo full of thy carnality, that he hath ſecretly given thee over to the ſway and ſwinge of thy carnall reaſon, ſo that thou bewraieſt thy ſelfe what thou art, (as the rat behinde the painted cloath:) Try thy ſelfe by this alſo: Is thine heart, thy tongue, thy penne, thy carriage let looſe ſo farre, that no Preacher, no perſwaſion, can unſettle thee from thy dregs, but ſtill thou holdeſt and wilt hold thy baſe principles, they grow from a twig to a ſtrong arme

2 Kings

arme and bow of an oke paſt bending: thou wouldeſt pull out the throat of any man that ſhould rob thee of theſe whelps, and as a chaſte matron is to an harlot, ſo is a ſpirituall Miniſter or Chriſtian an offence and indignation unto thee: Doſt thou ſay as once a Phariſee did, Wife, let our children goe to our Pariſh Church (ſo they go no further) for they are green and raw, but as for thee and me, we need it not, we are not now to learne the way to Heaven, it is tedious to our old age to keepe our Church, we may doe as well at home in reading upon a booke: verily, many ſuch there are, who thus lye in their mire, and there (like old jades) dye, and will not come out! Art not thou ſuch an one? Nay art thou not growne ſo rooted in thy carnall reaſon, that it makes thee little better then a politicke Atheiſt, ſwaying all thy courſe by it, ſitting at the helme of it, and adoring it as then Idoll? *Achitophel* was a worſhipper of God too, but a villaine, who for his politicke ends would have *Abſalon* ſpread himſelfe a tent, and defile all his fathers concubines, to make all Iſrael to know, there could be no reconciliation! what? Was not ſuch a thing againſt God? Yes; but what is God to a politician? Tuſh, tell yee him of ſelling Church livings, of following his luſts and pleaſures, of ſerving the times, and framing his conſcience to the Religion of his betters? Is not that the way to be quieteſt, to have the favor of men, to have our luſts, and to be furtheſt off from a Puritan? As *Machiavel* was wont to ſay, truth of Religion is hard and needleſſe, a forme is eaſie, and to as good purpoſe: I ſay, examine thy ſelfe, perhaps thou haſt overlived thy hope and accompliſhed thy deſtiny, being now growne to meaſure all by thy owne fleſhly meet-wand, and to count gaine and luſt godlineſſe.

2 Sam. 16. 21.

4. Inſtan.

Againe, try thy ſelfe about theſe particulars following: Firſt, about Gods attributes: Doſt thou limit that infinite power, providence, alſufficiency of God to thy carnall ſenſe? So that God cannot change the miſeries of the times, cannot reſtore the integrity of his Goſpel, and the power of practice, cannot curbe and reſtraine the malice of bad inſtruments, becauſe it ſeemes unlikely. Secondly, about the way to ſalvation.

5. Inſtan.

Doſt thou cavill unweariedly with reſtleſſeneſſe of arguments againſt the doctrine of ſelfe-deniall, the utter inability of fleſh to convert himſelfe, or doing any thing toward his owne happineſſe? Canſt thou not beleeve God hath ſo ſmall a number; that the Miniſter in his duty is to be heard as God himſelfe; that morality hath no power in ſpirituall caſes; that the Sabbath is to be ſo cloſely kept; petty oaths and vaine words muſt be ſo accounted for; that we may not revenge our ſelves upon ſuch as hurt us, but love our enemies? Doſt thou think a man cannot become ſure of his ſalvation, by a bare word of God, without ſome revelation? Wilt thou with *Thomas* be brought to beleeve no more then thou ſeeſt? Art thou one of them that judge the goodneſſe or badneſſe of things by outward ſucceſſe? Doſt thou take foule ſcorne that the Miniſter of God ſhould teach thee the right carriage of thy ſelfe in thy calling, the married eſtate, thy buyings and ſellings, as well as how to keepe the Sabbath, to pray, or receive the ſacrament? Doſt thou cavill and ſay, thou art as able to teach him in ſuch experimentalls, as he can thee? Haſt not thou an opinion that becauſe men judge thee wiſe in a worldly buſineſſe

neſſe, therefore thy skill is as good in matters of God alſo? Doſt not thou diſdaine them who are ſeely in the world, as if they were unworthy of thy company or commendation?

By all theſe, and by all other markes and ſymptomes, which either I have or ſhall deliver, of this diſeaſe, I adviſe thee to try thy ſelfe: If any of theſe three cleave to thee, thou maieſt ſeeme wiſe to thy ſelfe, but thy wiſedome is earthly, ſenſuall and diveliſh: yea as our Saviour ſaid to *Peter*, Get thee behinde me Satan, for thou ſavoureſt not the things of God, but of men: And know that God and his matters are not more yrkeſome to thee, then thou to him: lukewarme water will not ſooner provoke vomiting, then thou doſt the Lord to vomit thee out of his mouth. And ſo much may ſerve for this: according as thou findeſt this uſe to diſcover thee, ſo let the other uſes following affect thee. Jam. Matth. 16.

Secondly, let this be an uſe of Admonition, conſiſting of ſundry caveats and watchwords to Gods people: And firſt beware leſt they bee offended at Chriſt and his ſimplicity: remembring that *item*, *Math.* 11. 6.7. Bleſſed is the man that is not offended at me. Diſeſteeme not your God, Religion, choice and portion, becauſe ye ſee the jollity of carnall men cannot brooke it, or ſtoope to the meanes thereof. *Ier.* 2.9. The Lord taxes his people for their forſaking him; by ſending him to Chittim and the heathens, ſaying, Doe the heathens change their Gods? So ſay I, change not, nay, be not aſhamed one jot the more at your Religion, becauſe of the deepe prejudice and diſrepute which the world hath it in. If ye be not yet reſolved to be ſincere, let not the opinion of worldlings beate you off: If you be reſolved, then much leſſe let them cauſe you to be aſhamed, or to ſhrinke in your hornes ever the more. If the truth of God be not able to backe ye againſt ſuch cavillers, you have taſted but ſmall love from God or ſweetneſſe in it: If you think it hard to ſuffer, to beare indignities for that which miniſters ſo unſpeakable peace of conſcience unto ye here, and muſt bring ye to heaven for ever, doe yee not requite her well for her labour? No, ſay with our Lord Jeſus, *Matth.* 11.29. I thanke thee, Oh Father, that thou haſt hidden theſe things to the wiſe, and haſt revealed them to babes! My heart is more knit unto thee for thy honouring poore ſoules (who have nothing to take too, ſave thy ſelfe) with ſo rich a Pearle as Chriſt and Faith; then it can be offended with thee, that there be ſo few great, noble or learned ones to profeſſe it: Alas! They have greater matters to attend, and while they carry their heads in the cloudes, they fall into the ditch; their bellies are filled with their earthly treaſure, and their ſpirits are puft up with their great wiſdome: But we looke low and creep upon the earth, that thou maieſt powre downe thy heavenly riches upon us; and ſhall we having a feaſt in the mountaines, envy their diet of the valleyes? No, if the Lord hath given thee any inſight into the myſtery of Chriſt and regeneration, what frame and bent of heart the Lord delights in, Oh hugge it.

Vſe 2. Admonition. 1. Branch.

Be not aſhamed nor weary of powerfull Religion.

Pſal. 17.

Be not troubled with the verdict of carnall reaſon, for as the roote is, ſo is the fruit: Men doe not gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thiſtles: Alas! If you ſee the world love her owne things, ſo love you the Lords, and be not aſhamed of him before Princes: Let the ſame affections bee

Matth. 7.17.

2Kings

found in you, when you are compelled to be in the company of worldlings, which you bewray in the company of zealous ones, (due circumstances obſerved) and abhorre the leaſt wry, baſe thought, word, or behaviour, which ſhould cauſe them to thinke, that you are daſhed one whit out of countenance in your Religion for their ſakes. I am not aſhamed (ſaith *Paul*, for chaines and priſons ſake, or for falſe teachers ſake who rejoyce in the fleſh) of the Goſpel of Chriſt, for it is ſtill (as it was ever) the power of God to ſalvation: and ſo *Phil.* 3.16.17. There bee ſome (of whom I told you before, and tell you againe weeping, enemies to the croſſe, whoſe God is their belly, whoſe glory is their ſhame, who minde earthly things. But what of that? Shall my converſation be ever the leſſe in heaven? No: ſo *David Pſal.* 73. was troubled at the jollity of ſuch, till he recovered himſelfe, ſaying, ſuch a foole was I, yea a beaſt in thy ſight! But then he addes, I have none in heaven but thee, or in earth like thee! Thou ſhalt make their image deſpiſed! And it is good for me (doe as they liſt) to draw neare to God! Oh! if thou wouldeſt cling to God, he would make ſuch to come and worſhip at thy feete, and to chuſe thy portion! and ſo they ſhall when God ſhall viſit them, ſo little cauſe haſt thou the whileſt to flinch for them.

Rom. 1.16.

Pſal. 73.20.

25.26.

Deſpiſe carnall reaſon, as faſt as the deſpiſeth the ſimplicity of grace.

Deſpiſe you their carnall reaſon as faſt as they diſdaine your ſimplicity: Say of it as *Ahab* of *Micaia*, I hate him, for he never ſpeakes well on my ſide. And do not conſort with them in their way, to ſeeke approbation and allowance from them, in point of any complement or endowment, whereby your hearts ſhould be drawn aſide from ſincerity. Perhaps when you ſee the world eſteemes you for any outward gift in you, you will (with *Hezechia*) pride your ſelves in their allowance, and ſo forfeit conſcience. But as *Salomon* ſaith, Taſte not of their dainties *Prov.* 23.2. for they are deceiveable meate. In the ſtory of our Church wee read, that many of the Martyrs were highly priſed for their parts, ſome for curious ſingers in a Quire, as Parſons at Windſor, ſome for dexterity and diſpatch, as *Marbeck* was admired by *Gardiner* for his Engliſh concordance, *Smith* for his skill in painting, *Hawkes* for his perſonage and parts of wit and expreſſion, *Iulius Palmer* for his neat and ripe wit & learning: But Oh! their purity and holineſſe, theſe ſtained them. What cared theſe holy men for their approbation of one, or abhorring of the other? For their parts they eſteemed all as droſſe for Chriſt, our Maſter Chriſt was ſcorned for his baſeneſſe, becauſe he was no Prince of the world, but rode meekly upon an Aſſe. But did hee care for it? No, If my Kingdome were of this world, my ſervants would ſurely fight; but ſince it is of another, let this goe. Oh brethren! one great cauſe of our diſguiſement at this day, and of our degenerate profeſſion, is (as I ſuppoſe) the peize and weight which this carnall world hangs upon a Religion of form, whereby (with common conſent) they exalt it on high, as that which hath prevailed againſt uprightneſſe. It is an ey-ſore now a dayes to our jolly Chriſtians, to be over preciſe, and to croſſe with the ſway and ſtreame of the world; and therefore now, all ſtraine their wits to ſeeke out ſome liberty and diſpenſation againſt preciſeneſſe, that they might temporiſe with ſuch. Beware (ſome of ye) leſt you loſe your Religion in carnall reaſon! I can tell you, it will ſoone overſhadow and

Eſay 39 2.

Prov. 23.2.

Joh. 18.36.

and deface the power and vigor of it, if ye looke not the better to it. Nothing is ſuch a choakepeare to Religion, and ſuch a pillar of Satans Kingdome, as this carnall reaſon! And dare we be aſhamed of our ſpirituall by a carnall? Doe we beginne in the ſpirit, and end in the fleſh? Looke we well to our ſelves, that we loſe not the good things wee have ſwet for: know it! Gods apples will not ſwimme in one ſtreame together with this dung of carnall reaſon: be content (if it muſt needs ſo be) to be counted abſurd and irrationall: Say with him, that had throughly learned his leſſon, by that which you call hereſie; I profeſſe to worſhip God; by this my Religion of ſpiritualneſſe, I moſt honour him! If I be deceived, ſo it is. I abhorre the coleworts and unſavory ſalt of carnall reaſon! Oh! what thoughts of heart doth it cauſe, that many Chriſtians formerly of ſpeciall note for zeale and holineſſe, ſhould forget of what note they were, and become of the conciſion; be aſhamed of their circumciſion! Oh! that men ſhould now count Religion which was wont to ſtand in the renewing of their mindes, now to conſiſt in their transforming to the preſent world! As in *Peters* time, ſo now, men count it abſurd, that we runne not with them to the ſame exceſſe of riot: And as *Micol*, ſo all her children, (for ſhe is not barren of theſe) count *Davids* and dancers before the Arke, fooles! But I tell the (O man) if thou feare God, thou hateſt the very garbe and outſide of a carnall worldling, as the next ſtep to arrant prophaneſſe and revolt! Be aſhamed of no part of ſpirituall Religion, but count it thy Crowne! ſay not, I will be as I was in heart, but to pleaſe my Maſter and to ſhun ſcorne, I muſt now and then drinke, be of the common cut and faſhion, and game, make up my bargaines at the Alehouſe, weare long haire, bolt out petty oathes, and ſay ſome prayers in family, as theſe rationall men do.

Gal 3.2.
2 Joh.8.

Act.24 14.

Phil.3.2.

Rom.12.2.3.
1 Pet.4.4.

2 Sam.6.23.

Marke what I ſay to thee, As I doe not bid thee carry thy ſelfe as a foole among ſuch, venting whatſoever thou thinkeſt, and croſſing ſhins with every prophane fellow; ſo yet, if, for thy wife, holy and ſpirituall worſhip of God, thou be diſeſteemed and nicknamed, and thereby art aſhamed and diſcouraged, woe be to thee! Thou art aſhamed of him, who will (one day) be aſhamed of thee, before Angels and men! Gods people are indeed and muſt be counted ſtrange ones, odd, abſurd; none but ſtrange men, pilgrimes and ſtrangers, abſtainers from the diet of the common world, can goe to heaven: No rationall carnall ones ſhall come there: I ſpeake not this to cauſe thee to diſtaſte reaſon and wiſe proceedings in thy buſineſſe, or to affect ſome guiſe which others doe not, as if Religion ſtood in ſuch affectation, (for the commoneſt is beſt, if modeſt) but to teach thee as a child of wiſdome, to juſtifie wiſdome, and not to condemne the generation of the righteous, for the ſake of a multitude who are led by blinde reaſon: I conclude this point, If thy Religion ſhould coſt thee ſome diſgrace, ſcorne and deſcant, yet if a ſpirituall one, be not aſhamed in that behalfe: If this to be vile, be more vile, and hang theſe reproaches before thee as thy glory, committing thy ſelfe to him in weldoing, who wil requite thee an hundred fold for that thou loſeſt for him. ſo much for this firſt branch of this uſe of Admonition.

1 Pet.4 16.
Matth.16. end.

2 Cor.9.end.

Rationall carriage ſimply not condemned.
Matth.11.19.
Pſal 73.9.
Sam. 6.22.
1 Pet.4 21.

A ſecond branch of Admonition to Gods people, is, That they beware of nouriſhing any ſuch dregs of this diſeaſe in themſelves, as may either

2. Branch of Admonition.

2 Kings

either hurt their owne ſoules, hinder the power of the word in them, ſet God himſelfe againſt them, to purge them by unwelcome medicines, or cauſe Gods people to bee jealous of them, for their overmuch propenſneſſe and inclination to this carnall reaſon. Still I prevent any objection which might ariſe, let none thinke I debarre Gods people from either reaſonable and wiſe courſes in their affaires or pollicy (ſo farre as warrantable) in Religion it ſelfe. No, in no wiſe (as the woman of *Abel* ſpake to *Ioab*) but there is a traitor, carnall reaſon the ſonne of old *Adam* in the City, which makes all the confuſion; throw his head over the wall, and I have done. Many profeſſors defile the ointment of ſweete Chriſtianity, with their overmuch pollicy, carnall fetches, and this dead fly, makes all ſtinke. They put more of the Serpent, then the Dove into the confection: their wiſdome is not ſubdued and well prepared, as the Apothecaries uſe to ſubact and kill the poiſon of that ſerpent, whereof they would make an antidote: a man may perceive, they are more reaching, ſubtill, temporiſing and equivocally reſerved in their courſes, then truly humble, harmeleſſe and innocent: their traffique, their company, their liberties, their family worſhip, their whole demeanure bewraies them: that feare of mens diſpleaſure, ſhrugging at the leaſt ſtir of danger, or the like, are above plaine naked ſimplicity of beleeving or obeying with them. Chriſtians, (ſo they walke as wiſely as they may) ſhould ſtraine no bloud out of the noſe of wiſdome, nor ſeeke to goe too farre in their carnall circumventions; but leave all to God, let him ſee to them, and ſay, I am thine Lord, ſave me; I deſire to walke in thy way: Stand betweene me and my harmes, ſo that I need not for any ſtraits, bee put to an ill conſcience: I commit and roll my waies and ends all upon thee, doe thou all my workes for me.

Nouriſh no ſuch dregs in us, as by which carnall reaſon might be ſupported.

2 Sam.20.21.

Sundry of theſe noted.

Eccleſ.10.1. Matth 10.

Prov.30.34.

Pſal.119.93.

Pſal.37.5.

I ſee (brethren) an apparent difference among you in this point: That the ſimple and well meaning dare ſcarce truſt many of you (who yet would ſeeme as forward profeſſors) becauſe they ſee ſuch ſhrewdneſſe, ſuch tricks and pollicies in bargaines, and performings of promiſes, ſuch hard dealing, ſavouring too much of worldly wit, and every man laying in for himſelfe, to ſave one: Others have ſmooth tongues of their owne to defend their ill qualities, even by lying and ſhifting defences, others can keepe their owne councell, and make the world beleeve, that they are forward men in Religion, but all is to bite in their owne mindes and conceale that deepe ignorance which they know is in them, or elſe worſe evills, which they count deepe skill to hide from ſuch as might teach or admoniſh them: whereas others are naked and glad to be open hearted in confeſſing themſelves each to others, that they might ſhame themſelves. And ſo the one aimes at avoiding ſhame, the other at getting grace: Others have an excellent gift at giving good words, with *Napthali*, but they will be ſure to ſpare their owne purſes, their charge and travell to avoid expences, yea ſuch as by their owne conſent are laid out for their behoofe; others will be as little as they can in good conference or in extraordinary duties, for feare; loath to let their neighbours ſee them forwarder for the Goſpel, or in loving the miniſtery, then they are, leſt they ſhould be cenſured: others are very zealous for the Goſpel, with a ſquint eye to their ſhops, their trades, cuſtome, good marriage and takings

Carnall pollicy cauſes breaches among profeſſors.

Gen.49.21.

kings: Others will in no ſort diſpleaſe their Landlords, or ſuperiours, very Nicodemites, doing that they doe by night and by ſtealth, for ſhame, or feare, wanting faith and courage, to carry them out: Others covet to be thought well of by all ſorts, and ſo carry a very eaven and ſmooth courſe, rather void of vices, then truly vertuous in Gods ſight; and ſulſomely ſalute all ſorts with equall love and curteſie, good and bad, ſo that a man cannot ſee conſcience to ſway them. 2Kings

Joh.3.3.

Others have ſuch a darke and doubtfull behaviour, that no man can tell what to make of them, like thoſe Scepticks, who were ever conſidering; ſo theſe walke as ſtaggerers, neuters, nonreſolved ones, as if their Religion were ſtill to chuſe; and theſe affect the name of very wiſe ones, becauſe they will utter themſelves no further, then (if need be) they may keep their retreat ſafe, and have the winde on their backs. Others are very carnall in ſeeking their owne praiſes, and advance their owne gifts, merits, and good deeds, not ſo much for Gods ends as to blaze their owne worth and to be counted benefactors. Others will ſmooth and ſide with the bad and corrupt in a Towne, leſt they ſhould diſpleaſe, and ſo betray good government to their owne ſelfe-love; cannot endure to ſee any of their own kindred to be puniſhed (much leſſe their children) for open crimes; eager to maintaine their owne greatneſſe, ſway and elbowroom, in their places: Others will alway goe with the ſtronger ſide, be their cauſe never ſo bad: Others are ſo dangerouſly worldly, ſnigging and biting, uſurers, hard and oppreſſing, or defrauding the ſimpler in their bargaines, cannot abide any ſhould go out of their fingers without a nip: Others affect good Preachers for ſome carnall ends, and profeſſors for their naturall parts, love the richer ſort, cleave to Gentlemen and great ones, ſuch as weare velvet and ſattin and rings, but bid the meaner ſort ſit at their footſtoole: Others fall to compare Miniſters, and who ſhall go for their mony: Againe, to end, how many are there, who will be all in all to them whom they are beholding to, for their gifts, favours, lendings, and gratifications, deſpiſing others? Infinite it were to mention all. I have (I doubt) wearied you already: For ſome are yet worſe, and will ſit at table and heare godly Miniſters and others depraved by vile tongues, and ſcarce give them their breath to latch the blow, leſt themſelves ſhould bee thought too forward: Not to ſpeake of thoſe large breadths which they take to themſelves in their profeſſion, for their attires, pleaſures, haire, companies, and the like. Shall I praiſe you in theſe? I praiſe you not.

Jam.3.3.

I fear rather that this carnall reaſon and corrupt heart of yours, hath betraied you to him who is the father of cunning and ſubtilty; & truly ſince this new found Religion of worldly pollicy and ſhifting came in, the ſimplicity of godlineſſe hath been thruſt up in a narrow roome. And I tell ye plainly brethren, I fear that theſe timeſerving qualities do but lie in many of your boſomes to betray ye, when times of triall for the truth ſake ſhall come! then (as thick as now ye ſtand up to ourvery mouthes & pulpits crowding for roome) when ye ſhall ſee ſome of us ſuffer for the truth we preach or practiſe, we ſhall ſee you come as behinde hand and ſcanty: Tell not me, I will never beleeve it; he that cannot walke ſincerely toward the Goſpel in peace, he will never abide one brunt for it, by perſecution;

Carnall reaſon eates up grace.

Profeſſors unſound in peace will be ſo much more in perſecution.

2Kings

cution; I looke to ſee this place thinne enough one day, by many of you, who (I doubt) thinke full little of it, and ſay, Am I a dogge that you preſage ſuch things of yee? No, I judge you not as dogges, but God give you and me, the properties of children, to be more ingenuous, cordiall and plainehearted: Theſe Eagles feathers mixt with others, devoure and marre all: Start at ſuch mixtures of carnality, as once an holy woman of this aſſembly did, who being inclined to the dropſie, and conſulting with the Phyſitian, (who bad her to beſtirre herſelfe and be angry with her ſervants, and fly about their eares luſtily) anſwered, Oh! this will breed a worſe ſickneſſe in me, your remedy is worſe then my diſeaſe! As ſhe durſt not offend God by carnall wiſdome for health, ſo neither grate you or goe againſt the edge with ſimplicity of conſcience and converſation, either for feare, favour, flattery, liberty, gaine or ends of your owne; but joyne with a comely and lawfull prudence in your waies, the ſimplicity of Doves; and you ſhall finde that he who walkes plainly in his courſe, and deales faithfully in reproofe of evill, ſhall at laſt have more peace in death, and be more honoured then all crangling and worldly wiſe braines, who have ſo many wayes to the wood.

1 King 8.13.

One Barbara Rogers.

Proverb.

The fox and the cat were talking of their tricks, but when the hounds came, the cat knew one thing, worth all the foxes skill, for ſhe leapt upon the tree and was ſafe, when the other was torne in peeces. Death or the croſſe will try us who hath beſt skill, either the ſubtill or the ſimple: As he once ſaid to the Crabfiſh (which he had alway obſerved to goe backward, and to gather up her joynts) when ſhe was dead, and lay open and ſpread abroad; Oh, ſo you ſhould have lived! So ſay I to you, to ſuch as one day ſhall wiſh plainneſſe, Oh, you ſhould have loved it all your life! Doe ſo ſtill, it is never too late to amend, if your hearts be not hardened: Oh! turne your ſwords into mattocks, and ſuch of ye as have delighted to bee perillous and ſhrewd fellowes, affect plainneſſe, fly with Doves, as birds of that feather; let the little child play at the hole of the aſpe: Call not in queſtion the truth of your Religion, affect not darke, cloſe and doubtfull carriages, but be as little children void of guile: And ſo doing, as *Peter* ſaith, 1 Epiſt. Chap.2.1. caſting off all guile and falſhood, come (and welcome) as new borne ones to covet the milke of the word: It would never trouble me then to preach to you: but now I feare you defile the truth, (or your ſelves rather) with that you heare. There comes a thing to my minde, really done, of which I will tell you: Once a ſimple minded traveller upon a poore horſe was overtaken by two or three ſwaggerers well mounted, who asked him whither he would, and how farre hee went that day? He told them to ſuch a place, twenty or thirty mile off, and he hoped to reach it if God let him not: They ſcorning him and his poore horſe, pranſed away, (having a journey alſo to goe) but at next Alehouſe or Taverne they ſtayed an houre or two upon their tobacco and wine, and having ſo done, to their geldings they went, and put hard on; by that time the poore man was gotten a good way forward, keeping ſtill his plaine courſe and race; and being againe overtaken, was againe mocked by theſe gallants; but in fine, ſo it fell out, that their oft turnings into the Taverne at each five miles end ſpent their day, and kept them from their journeyes end; where-

An eminent patterne.

whereas the poore mans eaven and honeſt pace, overtooke them and caſt them behinde. Walke plainly and hold on with ſimplicity, and that ſhall bring you ſafer home, then all the flouriſhings of carnall men, though now and then at a ſtart, they may ſeeme to outſtrip you. So much for this ſecond branch of the Admonition.

3. Branch. Admonition. Gods people muſt ſo ſhun carnall reaſon, as yet not incurring the juſt aſperſion of folly.

A third caveat may ſerve from hence, to teach Gods people to ſhun the contrary extremity of fooliſhneſſe and indiſcretion in all their courſe and converſation. True it is, carnall reaſon and fleſhly wiſdome is an exceſſe and overflow: yet want of wiſdome, prevention, activeneſſe, and dexterity in managing our affaires, is another extreame in the defect, and to be avoided as prejudiciall to the repute of the godly, diſhonourable to God, and occaſioning baſe ſcorners, to caſt aſperſion upon Religion, as if none but fooles were ſo preciſe. All that feare God therefore, doe not (under colour of abhorring carnall reaſon) abandon reaſon and all from your attempts. Wiſdome makes the face of a man to ſhine, and makes a man to ſtand before his betters; however it is the counſell of the wiſe man, eſtabliſh thy thoughts by counſell, and by counſell make way. And Saint *Paul* ſaith, Be not ſlothfull in buſineſſe. Some men are like thoſe who bend crooked ſticks; they cannot mend one extreame, ſave by bowing the ſtick to a quite contrary bent, till they breake it: Some to avoid one rocke of ſenſuall and worldly reaſon, ruſh upon another rocke of raſh incogitancy and precipice, running headlong about their matters. Right reaſon may be kept (as the Townclarke told them of Epheſus) though carnall be abhorred, which is but the dregs and lees of the other. God hath (not for nothing) planted underſtanding in the minde of man, to bee as the Pilot to ſteere the motion and courſe of our ſhip, through this vaſt ſea-faring life of ours; and therefore he will have all his to ponder their way, and tells us, That the eies of a wiſe man are in his head, as the fooles are in his heeles. And therefore as in divine eſpecially, ſo in humane matters alſo, it becomes a Chriſtian to walke as exactly as wiſe, not as fooles. It is the part of a wiſe man to thinke thus, I make conſcience of contention and quarrells, goings to law: Therefore to prevent ill report, reproach, loſſe, and repenting too late, it behooves me to goe wiſeſt to worke of all: Wranglers and leud ones, if they have overſhot themſelves, will helpe themſelves many waies: but a Chriſtian muſt forfeit and loſe that which by diſcretion he prevents not. Therefore deale and binde ſure, if thou wilt finde ſure; leave not bargaines doubtfully and rawly: require bills or bonds in matters of weight; take not things upon truſt, mens bare words and promiſes, ſaying, neighbour, you and I ſhall agree, take it, or let me have it: But take witneſſe, reſt not upon bare meanings, and forgotten covenants, which breed many differences in the upſhot, unwelcomely, and ſutes needleſſe and unkinde.

Proverb. Proverb. Rom. 12. Act. 10. end. Proverb. Epheſ. 5. 17. Jer. 32. 10.

There is I confeſſe diverſity between men, religious and carnall; but let not that foreſtall diſcretion. I have dealt (ſaith one) for ſo much, with my friend without ſcript & ſcroll, and I hope now we ſhall not diſagree: yes, it comes in a day, which falls not out in ſeven yeare againe; and death may cauſe as great difference betweene the beſt, as the worſt. *Abraham* would not take *Ephrons* ſhuffling words; What is that between me and thee?

Sundry inſtances of folly in the dealings of Chriſtians. Gen. 23 15. 16.

2 Kings

2 Sam. 24. 24.

1.

1 Cor. 6. 2.

Rom. 12.

2.

The third and maine.

thee? But weighed him out the ſilver and tooke witneſſe. And *David*, when *Araunah* would have given him his floore, would not ſo ſlightly goe to worke, but paid him his price. Oh! it is not the ſpeech of wiſe men, but fooles, to ſay, I had thought thus and thus, or I thought not of this or that! Did ye not? Why did ye not that in time, which after will bee too late to redreſſe? What a ſhame is it for a Chriſtian who muſt judge the earth, not to be able to manage his owne buſineſſe? Not to ſtoppe a breach with the coſt of a ſhilling, which after may prove a ruine and coſt a pound? Not to be skilfull in his trade, in knowing the ſeaſons of ſowing, tilling, reaping and husbandry in their ſeaſons? What a ſhame it is, for him who ſhould be fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord, to be ſlack and lazy in his calling, and by improvidence, to become himſelf a burthen to the Church, a reproach to the wicked, and a tempter of God to ſuffer the ſeed of the juſt, to beg their bread? How is this prevented, ſave by ſerving providence?

Whence come ſo many banquerupts as are, even profeſſors, ſave in great part from hence, that men ruſh unskilfully upon unknowne trades, fill their hands with ſtocke (from other mens purſes) wanting skill and experience to manage them? And ſo by their unskilfulneſſe either in husbandry, manufactures or traffique, ſpend their own, and their wives portions and childrens meanes, and ſo muſt ſeeke to hide it by travell into another world? Are not our plantations like to take well, if ſuch be the planters? Others although of a loving heart to Gods people, yet wanting diſcretion, ſuffer themſelves to be much overlaid with burdenſome perſons, which oft cauſeth ſtrife betweene them and their wives, when their ſtates ſinke. Others pick quarrels with their trades, and ſo changing them for hoped gaines in another, bury their ſtockes. Others attempt forraine voiages raſhly, having no ability, ſpending that in the journey, which at home might be a ſtock for them to live upon; being utterly inexperienſed in ſuch imployments as they muſt bee put upon. Others hope for great matters abroad, and finding poverty, grow diſcontented and repent them. We muſt know, it is one thing for a man to deny himſelfe for God, when he calls us, as he did *Abraham*; another to call our ſelves, when God calls not, but rather our owne ſpirit deceives us: And yet it is a common thing with ſuch, if they be taxed for ſuch raſhneſſe, to ſay that men ſpeak like worldlings from carnall reaſon; what? Muſt not God be truſted? Yes, but not tempted. *Paul* and the Pilot Act. 28. differed, yet *Paul* would not beat out his braines, nor caſt him overboord, but rather guide him in his government.

But the worſt of this folly is, when it diſguiſeth Religion herſelfe, and cauſeth that which is wiſdome it ſelfe, to be counted fooliſhneſſe. How many men pull upon themſelves unſeaſonable and needleſſe trouble, ſtrong and cruell enemies, fines, cenſures, impriſonments, for their ungrounded zeale, raſh judgings of their betters, without a calling, (for then I grant they ſerve the Lord who will beare them harmeleſſe) mixing their owne paſſions, invectives, upbraidings and diſtempers, with the cauſe of Chriſt, who needed no weapons of ſuch warfare: And hereby bring upon themſelves either uncomfortable ſufferings (if they ſtick to it) or elſe baſe recanting of their follies: How many private perſons run them-

themſelves a ground, by medling with abuſes and corruptions, to which they are not called, going againſt the ſtreame of thoſe evills which it is bootleſſe to exaſperate, and ſo are drowned in that gulfe which they cannot ſhoote? How many neglecting their callings, under pretence of zeale, runne from place to place, miſpend their time, borrow and pay not againe, open the mouthes of the vile againſt them to ſay, theſe fellowes rayle upon us for our carnall wiſdome and worldlineſſe: But ſurely wee had rather follow our worke hard, then hang upon each buſh, and runne our ſelves into debt, and pay no man.

Againe, how many fooliſh and raſh women, by their unſeaſonable croſſings of their carnall husbands, cauſe zeale in hearing ſermons, to be ill ſpoken of, through their want of ſubjection? And few there are, who have learned to walke wiſely toward ſuch husbands, Maſters, parents, neighbours who are wit hout, that ſo their liberty be not reſtrained, and their commodity be not ill ſpoken of, by their abuſing it to fleſhly ends? How many zealous Miniſters lacke wiſdome, moderation, and obſerving of ſeaſon, manner and meaſure of their reproofes and cenſures, but diſable themſelves as much one way, as they thinke to doe good another? But it were endleſſe to dwell upon all. Let the concluſion be this: By how much thou ſeemeſt to abhorre carnall reaſon, by ſo much bee more carefull to be guided by right reaſon, and true wiſdome, which may cauſe thy Religion to be honourable, and prevent that offence and aſperſion thereto, which elſe cannot bee avoided: This for the third branch of Admonition.

1 Pet. 2. 12.

I conclude this uſe with the fourth and laſt caveat, ſomewhat more generally concerning Chriſtians of all ſorts. Firſt, let me preſſe this perſonally to the ſundry ſorts and conditions of men, Miniſters, people, parents, husbands, tradeſmen and ſuch like: Then let me alſo preſſe it really, by abandoning thoſe ſeverall vices, which beget and nouriſh this carnall reaſon in men. Touching the former: Firſt, let it be admonition to Gods Miniſters: Go not to work with this toole in Gods matters. Pleaſe not your ſelves in your invention, preparation of your ſelves, when God ſuggeſts variety of thoughts, aptneſſe of diſcourſe or fine phraſes, good proofes, uſes, ſimilitudes and applications; do not feel your own warmth, take it not for granted that you cannot now chuſe but win the ſpurs: but know, Gods matters muſt be done under another banner: As he ſaid, not words, but ſtrength and mony muſt helpe in the warre: So ſay I, not your ſtrength, nor might, nor wiſdome, but my Spirit (ſaith the Lord) muſt effect it. As the Lord ſaid to *Iehoſhua* and *Zerubbabel*, although you be weake in your ſelves, yet I will inable you to lay the foundation, and to make the roofe of my Temple: So, let God be chiefe in your worke and deny your owne reaſon, leſt God confound ye, and make ye ridiculous to them whom ye would ſell your ſelves unto.

4 Branch of Admonition, direct to ſundry objects.

1. *Object.* Miniſters in ſundry reſpects.

Eſay 36. 5.

Zach. 5. 7.

Againe, draw not on your people to carnall admiring of your parts, learning, ſpeech & memories; teach them not a leſſon which they are too prone to teach themſelves, to have the faith of our Lord Jeſus in the admiration of men, or accepting of perſons! It is the way to breed partiality, pride, carnall favour in your people, and to deſtroy the ſpirit of ſelfe-deniall and ſimplicity in them.

2.

Jam. 3. 1.

Vent

2Kings

3. Vent not your owne ſingular conceits and fantaſticall private opinions, to enhanſe your names among the vulgar and ungrounded multitude, whoſe honour is but baſe breath, and ends in ſhame and repentance: Forſake not the maine truthes of God and the ſtreames of wholeſome doctrines, for thoſe muddy creekes and ſlimy channels of your owne inventions: for if this heate once touch your braine, you ſhall finde it ſo to follow your hand, that (ere ye be aware) you will be over head and ears in this puddle, and nothing will ſavour with your miniſtery, but your owne novelties. What a pudder have thoſe Eavoniſts and Pointers (as they call them) made in Norfolke of late, being men wholly ungrounded in the principles, yet under pretence of zealous magnifying the freedome of grace and power of faith, how have they puffed up themſelves in a conceit of their owne perfection, and maintained that they need not pray daily for pardon: Oh, wofull pride!

4. Moreover, beware ye Miniſters of Chriſt, of preaching Chriſt carnally, of envy rather then good will, and of ſwerving from the plaine and effectuall demonſtration of the ſpirit, (whereunto all learning and parts are too meane to ſerve and attend:) Beware I ſay of taxing ſuch, as although they affect not your courſe, yet come not ſhort of you in ſufficiency and worth: Farce and ſtuffe not your Sermons with quaint and neate words, frequent quotations of Fathers and languages (whenas God knowes you make it (ſome of you) but a vaile to hide your ignorance among them that are ſimple) Alas! oftimes your falſe Latin and Greeke bewrayes you to the judicious. *Peter* converted not three thouſand at once with ſuch preaching! Be wiſe unto ſobriety: I deny not but among the learned, or in controverſies handled among them, there is good uſe of tongues and arts oftimes: But to the ſimple idiot, ye are but ſignes of Gods wrath, no inſtruments of Grace.

1 Cor.14.21. 22.

5. Again, affect not morall ſubjects alone in your Miniſtery, (though there be uſe thereof) but eſpecially ſtrive to goe againſt the carnall edge of the people, and firſt ground them in thoſe things which are ſpirituall: urge the doctrine of originall ſinne, faith in the promiſe, ſelfe-deniall, the new creature, mortification, taking up the croſſe, preparation for death, and the comming of Chriſt; other things will fitly follow, if once your peoples hearts be truly broken and moulded in Chriſt, they will ſoone take the ſtampe of your morall doctrines: but if ye beginne with theſe, you ſhall as ſoone take an hare with a tabor, as draw them to ſavour that which jarreth with their carnall reaſon. So much for you my brethren.

1.
2. *Object.* People in divers things.

Now for you, the people and hearers, I ſay this: be not led away with partiality and conceit in heaping up to your ſelves teachers of your own, deſpiſing others; but in all ſimplicity, embrace ſuch, and all ſuch with an indifferent ſpirit (according to the proportion of their gifts) who are meet to do you good: God hath made them all yours to ſerve your ſouls: be not ſo baſe as to embondage your ſelves, and cleave to ſuch or ſuch perſons or parts, neglecting the maine ſcope of common edifying: occaſion not jealouſie and diſtaſte among Gods Miniſters themſelves by your folly; (as ye muſt needs doe, if they be not the wiſer) but cull out each mans ſpeciall gift, and make uſe thereof as given you to the ſupply and

and furniture of each part of the body, with moſt apt and meet grace and ability, for her need. Diſcourage not Gods Miniſters who are faithfull, by balking their Miniſtry, and cleaving to ſtrangers, and perhaps inferior to them: Theſe are pangs of carnall wiſdome, and ſavour not of that ſpirit which is from above, pure and peaceable: Much leſſe be drawne away from ſound teaching, to carnall jangling, that ſo ye may learne an eaſie way to heaven, forſaking that one way which is truth and life. Affect not pompuous words, great ſhews, ſuch as ſet forth themſelves with carnall complements and oſtentation: admire them not: perhaps becauſe you would faine come from Church with as whole a skin as yee brought, loath to be galled, becauſe your conſcience is crazy, therefore ye ſeeke to ſuch. And juſt it is with the Lord to plague people for this carnality of yours, with Miniſters juſt like themſelves, lips and lettuce, cup and cover agreeing, that each may be a ſtumbling block to the other. So that although you live as ignorant and blinde as blocks or bats, yet you ſhall glory in the fleſh of each other, ſaying, you have one of the Belwethers of the Country, as good, learned, peaceable, and good a fellow as any in the Kingdome: Oh! how doth Satan infatuate the world with the golden cup of formall devotion, through ſuch! that he might cry downe the power and ſincerity of the truth. Furthermore although you affect the moſt Religious Miniſtry, yet reſt not in the perſon: faſten not your faith upon man, his worth, zeale, holineſſe: beleeve not for mans ſake, but for that power and efficacy which you diſcover in the ordinance: let Gods truth be that into which your aſſent reſolves it ſelfe, leaſt otherwiſe Satan buffet you in the time of trouble, that you never diſtinguiſhed perſons from thinges, and the demonſtration of truth, from mans excellency.

Againe, catch not at new points, (forſaking old grounds) nor at choice ſimilitudes, alluſions and diſcourſes: I obſerve it among ſome of you, that if God vouchſafe us ſometime more neate expreſſions then ordinary, how are you taken with them! Oh! ſuch a Sermon, ſuch a point, how it affected you! take heed your braines deceive not your hearts; chuſe out ſpeciall Sermons, by the peculiarineſſe of conviction and perſwaſion, not by pleaſing conveiance of words. Beſides looke not at the outſide of thinges, but at their ſpiritualneſſe: looke not at a Minſter as a friend, or one that ſtands up to fill the roome, to ſerve the cure, and to ſtoppe confuſion: But ſo let men thinke of us (ſaith *Paul*) as the diſpenſers of the myſtery of Chriſt, (whatſoever their infirmities, errors, and wants be) and of the manifold graces of God, as meſſengers of reconciliation, as helpers of your joy (not to domineer and play *Rex*) but to feede the flocke, and to ſeale them up by the promiſe, to beget them to travell againe of them till Chriſt be formed in them; which thinges if they were looked at by the people, alas! that unſavoury and carnall eye wherewith they behold the Miniſter would be turned into a ſpiritual; their feet would be beautifull, they would give them their very eies, and count them as men of tenne thouſand. Men weigh not their gold in large hoppe ſcales, but in ſmall ones for the nonce, and ſo they weigh truly; ſo let not the Miniſter of God be put in common & carnall ballances, but in the weights of the ſanctuarie: Then the Miniſter ſhould be a Shekel

2Kings 3.

Jam. 4.

4.

Joh. 5. end.

5.

6.

2 Cor. 3. 1.

Rom. 10.

Job 33.

2 Kings

Matth.7.

Shekel indeed, and have double honour and maintenance; and be received as in the name of a Prophet, above a common man: you whose soules are ingaged to him (as an instrument) of your salvation, can tell what I meane. Such say with *Paul*, 2 Cor. 5. I know no man now according to the flesh, but according to their grace and spirituall use. Inure your selves to it now, and at sickenesse and death it will be sweet for you to heare God in him, (I mean your Minister) losing upon earth, that which he hath formerly forgiven in heaven. But I see that I have broken my bounds: I must breake off abruptly, and leave that which remaines both of this and the other uses, to the next Sermon, if God will. Let us pray, &c.

THE

THE EIGHT LECTVRE
ſtill continued upon this twelfth VERSE.

VERSE XII.

VERSE 12. *Are not Abana and Pharfar, rivers of Damaſcus, better then all the waters of Iſrael? May I not waſh in them and be cleane? So he went away in a rage.*

VERSE 13. *Then his ſervants came neere, unto him, and ſaid, Father, if the Prophet had ſayd ſome great thing &c.*

Could not (beloved in our Lord Jeſus) finiſh in the former exerciſe, that which I intended concerning the doctrine of carnall reaſon. I repeat nothing, but call to your minde, that in the fourth branch of admonition, I firſt ſpake (by way of watch-word) to the ſeverall conditions of my hearers. And firſt I entred upon caveat to Gods Miniſters, and ſo proceeded to the people. Let me now come to Parents and Governours: Bee carefull to what Tutors, and Teachers, Maſters and Guardians, ye commit the education of your children: Carnall reaſon lookes at carnall ends, where children may not be backe and belly beaten, where they may learne their bookes and trades, and have their ſtocks reſtored at their yeares end; and this I diſlike not; ſo be it, that ye neglect not their ſoules (which elſe will crie out againſt you) and leave them to themſelves; ſo be it, you plant them not under Maſters which are content (ſo they doe their worke) to give them their liberty upon the Lords day, to drinke, to game, and to keepe company with them, by whom they may ſoone be carried into the depth of Satan, and grow debaucht in their manners all their life after. Worldlings make but a mock of this I grant, and ſay, ſo they may have their children taught to behave themſelves civilly, and learne their occupation, they care not greatly for preciſeneſſe, or to have them more Religious then themſelves: but

2 Kings

3. Obiect. Parents and governours, beware of it

2 Kings

but when they ſee this narrow ſcantling will not be kept, but irreligion teacheth them to grow drunkards, uncleane, ſwearers and the like: Oh! then they wiſh they had beene brought up with Puritans! Oh, ye husbands and parents looke to it! let not carnall converſing with your wives and training up your children and ſervants, humoring them in their vices for peace and eaſe, teach them the common religion of the times, ſwearing, cogging, deceiving, breaking Sabbaths, geering and ſquibbing at thoſe that are better then their ſelves: I tell you, look what Characters are in your ſeale, will ſoon be ſeen by your wax; they ſhall have cauſe to curſe the day that ever they ſaw your faces; nay perhaps one day your owne conſciences ſhall rend you in peeces for that you ſee the fruit of your government appeare ſo fearfully, and ſhall ſay, it was I that nipt this bloſſome on the head, I corrupted my wife, I tainted my children in their youth, I ſhall pay the ſhot of their ſoules ruine.

4. *Object.* Husbands and wives.

5. *Object.* Phyſitians

So ye Phyſitians, take heed of the diſeaſe incident to your profeſſion, even to be haife Atheiſts, and that by aſcribing ſo much to naturall and ſecond cauſes, and too little to God: Philoſophy and Phyſicke will reveale no better, except Divinity teach you to aſcribe all to the ſupreame cauſe, and be content to ſtoop, and be at a ſet in your cures, when providence will have it ſo. Teach your ſelves & your patients who is that great Phyſitian that rules your Art; and take not upon you, to keep that key of ſucceſſe, thoſe iſſues of life or death, which are under divine cuſtody, who can kill by a diſeaſe not mortall, and can ſave when the diſeaſe is deadly.

All ſorts.

6. *Object.* Magiſtrates.

7. *Object.* Scholars and ſtudents.

Likewiſe you Magiſtrates, boaſt not of your skill in the law, but feare God, & ſay, it is the Lord who ſubdueth the people unto us: you ſchollers and Sudents, beware of that prophane tradition that ye cannot be religious and learned; ſet up the Bible above your other library, and prayer above your ſtudies, and the Lord above your wits; tye your boates to his ſhip, to be led according to his motion; follow the ſtar till you have found out the babe Jeſus, and doe homage to him with the firſt and beſt of your treaſures: Ye tradeſmen, ſhopkeepers and labourers, ſacrifice not to your nets, ſay not to your hands, you have made us rich: ye rich men ſay not to the wedge of gold thou art my ſtay, this were (as *Iob* ſaith) to deny the Almighty: ye poore folke now in this deare time, deſpaire not of releefe, becauſe you ſee few friends; ſay not, God give me health or elſe I ſtarve, for more then I worke for I looke not for: uſe induſtry, but ſet up God above, adore his providence who all this yeare hitherto hath ſo provided, that yet ye are not ſtarven, make him your God alſufficient: Ye midwives, teach not women in their travel to call upon our Lady, but bid them ſay, ſalvation is of the Lord. And thus would I ſpeake to all ſorts if they were preſent; caſt out that carnal reaſon whereby ye feele your ſelves moſt tempted to diſtruſt God.

8. *Object.* Tradeſmen.

9. *Object.*

10. *Object.* Rich and poore. Job. 32. 16.

11. *Object.* Midwives. Jona 3. 9.

And to theſe former, let me adde alſo other caveats in a word, againſt thoſe evills which nouriſh this carnall reaſon in you. As firſt, one prop of this ſinne is prejudice and foreſtalledneſſe: Such as thoſe Jewes, Acts 28. bewraied, who when *Paul* made his defence told him, This ſect of Nazarens is every where ill ſpoken of, and from this carnall ground, they renounced his apology and cauſe. A ſecond, is ſcandall at the power of Religion; Oh! it is a pinch and a checke to their carnall liberties, men

2. Branch of this fourth Admonition. 1. Prejudice an abettor of carnall reaſon.

cannot

cannot endure ſuch chaines, Pſal. 2. and will have no Lord to curbe their luſts. A third is, offence and ſtumbling at the meanes of Chriſt and Religion: Doe any of the Phariſees follow him? None ſave theſe people who are accurſed, embrace him. A fourth is, baſe feare of man, more then God. My grandfather, father, friends, favour not this way; I ſee it breeds loſſe, danger, trouble and purſuit. A fifth is, the tradition of men: As *Zachary* diſliked to name his ſonne *Iohn*, becauſe none of his family were ſo named; rather they chuſe to be irreligious ſtill, then to change the cuſtome of their forefathers: And the threats of parents to their children doe deterre others, ſaying, if I thought thou wouldeſt be one of theſe zealous ones, thou ſhouldeſt not have a foote of my land. A ſixth is, lewd counſell of ſuch as egge away the yonger ſort and tell them it is the next way to reproach and beggery. A ſeventh is, baſe flattery of ſuperiors, Oh! there is a flaviſhneſſe in ſome mens ſpirits, that ſo they may bee taken up with their betters, they will forfeit their Religion; they will loſe God, rather then the company and countenance of the great. An eight is, baſe eaſe and formality of profeſſion, it is an Idoll univerſally received, and ſpit out of the mouth of carnall reaſon, the Maſſe (as we ſay) bites not. A ninth is pollicy, when men equivocate with their owne conſcience for their ſafety ſake: as thoſe in Queene *Maries* time, who would come to Maſſe to ſpare their skin; and now adayes what dare not men doe, to ſave a living?

2. Scandall at Religion and her meanneſſe.
3. Baſe feare of man. Luke 1.
Tradition.
Lewd counſell.
Eaſe and formality.
Equivocation.

Here perhaps it might be expected, that I ſhould ſay ſomewhat about Jeſuiticall equivocations. But if men of their owne ſide might be heard ſpeake againſt them, Papiſts againſt Papiſt, I need ſay nothing: for ſundry of them have written in the open diſclaiming of ſuch villany. It is ſufficient, that in ſuch equivocations the heart thinkes one thing (by reſervation) and ſpeakes another, and that to deceive: What is lying if this be not? And whereas they ſay, that is for lawfull evaſion: I anſwer, it is indeed for evaſion, but that which is by a lying way cannot be lawfull. A Papiſt is asked, art thou a Prieſt? He anſwers no; hee reſerves this, not a Prieſt of Baal, or not a Prieſt to utter it to thee; herein is a lye both for matter and manner: for matter, in that he utters; for manner, in that he means, that is to deceive. They object, the whole propoſition made both of the expreſſion and ſuppreſſion is true: I anſwer, That only which is expreſſed, is the propoſition, which is a lye; not that which is concealed; if that were uttered, the whole were true, but ſo there were no coſenage. To thinke a truth, which in word they gainſay, is a lye. A lye properly reſpects another; by declaring his minde by words, which ſerve to that end; no man is ſaid to ly to himſelfe, but to another. If I ſhould ſay the fire is not hot, meaning by an heate externall; or a man is no reaſonable creature, meaning as an Angel: are not here lyes? Hee that denies, denies whatſoever is contained under the ſenſe of that he denies. He therefore, that ſo anſwers and ſweares, is perjured; and ſo all ſound Divines affirm. Let what tricks be uſed, that can be, God takes the oath not as he intends it who makes it, but as he who takes it: oaths muſt go according to the common uſe of men. To ſweare, is to call God as witneſſe in things doubtfull: but who doubts whether a Prieſt be a Prieſt of *Apollo*? Truth is an act of righteouſneſſe, not to be eſteemed by conceits,

Joſephus Barnes.
Milderus Epiſcopus Antwerp.

2 Kings

ceits, but words. See Jerem. 9. 8. 2 Cor. 4. 2. It is objected, they maintaine not ſuch anſwers alway, but for uſes to ſhunne danger, death, &c. I anſwer, that which is nought, muſt never be done. He that ſaith, I ſaw not ſuch a Prieſt, reſerving in his minde (at Rome or Venice) doth not qualifie his lye, becauſe he doth it to himſelfe onely; another cannot apprehend his mixture or limitation: Such therefore are of Saint *Iames* his double minded ones: It is objected, that which is concealed, is but onely a deſperate thing, not contrary to that which is uttered. I anſwer, yet it is a lye: for if I affirme that of *Plato*, which is only true of *Socrates*, it is a lye; yea this is a double lye, becauſe it is under the colour of ſimplicity. Againe, an oath is the end of all ſtrife, Heb. 6. 16. But by theſe oaths, controverſies are never ended, but endleſly multiplied: they object, the judge is incompetent; or they are asked of things under the ſeale and ſecret of confeſſion: but then we muſt not lye, but ſhunne ſuch a judge, or deny to anſwer: for what is ſo falſe, but may be made good, if we may reſerve what we liſt? A written lye, borrowes no truth from him that reads it, nor a ſpoken lye by him that heares it; a lye it is becauſe it is ſo in the writer and ſpeaker: Truth muſt be to us as *David* was to his ſouldiers, worth tenne thouſand of them, ſo worth our life, goods, liberty and all. The ſpeech of a woman; I will not therefore deny a truth, leſt I ſhould die; but I will not lye leſt I be damned. Tell me, what lawes could bridle lyers, if this courſe were lawfull? How fooliſh were the Martyrs who loſt their life for want of this tricke? Whoſe teſtimony ſhould be currant in Court? Theſe equivocators object the lies of the midwives, *Abraham*, *Dauid*, *Rahab* &c. But one ſinne excuſes not another. When 1 *Sam.* 16. the Prophet ſaid he came to ſacrifice, he was not asked the queſtion, he ſpake the truth, but not all, neither needed he, Chriſt ſeemed willing to goe further, but did not; and why? Becauſe he was diſſwaded by others. Other examples which they bring, are not words which require a reſervation to cleare them from a lye, but have an entire truth in them being aright underſtood. The concluſion is, the trade of equivocation is divelliſh.

Ambition.

A tenth is, affectation of honour and preferment, for which it is eaſie to loſe a good conſcience; hee that can loſe a little pompe, may purchaſe a great deale of peace. So alſo to end, ſchiſme and ſingularity, theſe and ſuch like, are oyle to this flame of this corruption; cut theſe off, intercept theſe ſuccours and through mercy this carnall reaſon may be ſtarved and vaniſh for lack of nouriſhment and fewell. But I inſiſt no longer: let this ſerve for the fourth branch, and ſo for the whole uſe of Admonition.

Schiſme and ſingularity.

Vſe 3. Confutation of Popery. 1. Inſtance.

A fourth uſe may be confutation of Popery: It is a meer dunghill raked together by carnall reaſon. All the world itcheth to goe after them. Thoſe that fear God ſhould ſay as *Peter* anſwered Chriſt, Joh. 6. Will ye alſo goe after them? No Lord thou haſt the words of eternall life. Alas! men are weary of ſpirituall worſhip, when they have carnall. The Divell and his eldeſt ſonne, know well the complexions of carnall people; and when the Goſpel hath beene preached twenty yeare together, yet people will long after the garlick and onions of old Religion, and carnall reaſon with her taile ſweepes downe a great part of the ſtarres of heaven:

ven : we doe but gugge and tire moſt men with our preaching of ſelfe-deniall and faith : Alas ! one carnall Popiſh fellow would draw more after him, then tenne Preachers. As one ſaith, The Divell never ſhed drop of bloud for us ; yet he boaſteth that he can have ten to one more at his beck then Chriſt. Popiſh Embaſſadours have puld away abundance of London profeſſors to their Maſſe ; they ſtabliſh their throne upon theſe two pillars of pompe and devotion, both carnall ; and by their *Circe* her cup, have made drunken the Princes, Peeres, people of the earth from the higheſt to the loweſt. Thoſe diveliſh devices and pretences of theirs, their antiquity, univerſality, viſibility, without interruption, of ſucceſſion, their conſent : Their goodly ſhewes, rich veſtments, ceremonies, golden Temples, Altars, Images, and Crucifixes, their allegation of Fathers, patching up old garments, with the ſhreds of mans teſtimonies, have ſet ſuch a flouriſh upon their Religion in the eies of fooles, that they have infinitely ſcrued themſelves into the affections of our libertines and carnall Proteſtants ; I have touched this point in one ſermon before, I will here be ſhort : As *Salomon* ſaith of the harlot, ſo ſay I of all their painted Religion ; Hee whom God hateth ſhall bee catcht by her : And it is juſt that ſo many in this land are left to tickle after this Religion of theirs ; The Lord leaves them to be deluded hereby, becauſe they never cared to receive the truth ; to bee gulled with pebles, becauſe they loathed Pearles. And when error hath gotten once into the entralls and bowells, it pleaſeth ſo well, and is ſo rooted, that they hardly returne to their former diet any more : The Dove cared not for the ſtrait Arke, when as once the face of the earth was dry, and gave hope of large liberty. The onely ſoile for Popery are the looſe moulds of carnall reaſon : There ſhe rootes and proſpers : beſides this, they mightily infinuate themſelves by carnall reaſon in another kinde. Their great promotions and preferments, which they profer to their adherents, doe mightily prevaile with ambitious mindes, and hath drawne aſide many pregnant wits.

Eccleſ. 7. 26.

Gen. 8. 12.

Another trick of carnall policy in Popery is this, That they have alway found *Sinons* and factors among our ſelves, to bring in the Trojan horſe among us, under pretence that our Religion and theirs, our ceremonies and theirs, doe not ſo differ, but that wiſe Caſſandrian ſpirits, and men of moderation might reconcile them together. In oppoſition whereof, one of our worthies wrote his Reformed Catholique, and ſhewed, that (notwithſtanding their blanchings) we muſt be as irreconciliable with them as light and darkeneſſe. To this end was that curſed Interim in *Charles* the ninth, and *Luthers* time, even to eate out the marrow of the Goſpel, and to choake all that were unſound at heart. The like to which, was that Poſſiack Synode in France ; and ſtill to this day, doe they keepe their poſſeſſion among us, by the mediation and negotiation of ſuch agents of theirs who (abhorring the power of truth) uphold Popery by their diſtinctions, and by conſorting and complying with the Papiſt to the uttermoſt, that he may be pleaſed, whoſover is wronged. And thus the cauſe of Chriſt from age to age, loſeth ground, and Popery enlargeth it ſelfe, as the ſea incroaching upon the ſhore. As our worthy Martyr *Iohn Rogers* once told thoſe Anglo-Germane exiles, if they ſtill reſolved

2. Inſtance.

2 Kings

to maintaine this Popiſh Pandora, and not to eſtabliſh pure worſhip, abandoning their traſh and formalities, all would goe to wreck, ſo wee finde it.

3. Inſtance.

And thirdly, herein they concurre with carnall reaſon, that from her they borrow helpe and aſſiſtance to their Religion, as if God needed ſuch art and skill of man, to further his deſignes. As for example, To provoke men to mortification from the world, they exhort them to renounce commerce with men, and betake themſelves to a Cloyſter. To draw men to chaſtity, they perſwade them to vow abſtinance from marriage. Sundry penances they lay upon the bodies and purſes of men, which though God never appointed, yet they ſay, it is impoſſible otherwiſe to prevaile againſt the invincible ſenſuality of men: Spirituall mortifyings being ſo difficult, that they ſee few will apply them, they are compelled to deviſe carnall, and ſuch as border upon the fleſh: And indeed they want not the example of many of the Fathers, who often ſtretch a joynt, and goe againſt the expreſſe Scripture, when they would perſwade any difficult duty, by adviſing policies of their owne, to eke out the infirmity (as they thinke) and penury of divine perſwaſions. As *Origen*, notwithſtanding all his Allegories of the text, yet made a groſſe and literall conſtruction of that text concerning Eunuches; making himſelfe one corporally, for the deſire he had of virginity: But ſuch tricks and devices of men the Lord abhorres: I confeſſe that himſelfe for a time permitted a pedagogy under the law, (when the light of truth was dimme) conſiſting of ſuch carnall rites and abſtinences, clenſings and humiliations; but withall he confined them to their ſpace and period, and meant not to have his Goſpel and the cleare ſunneſhine thereof to bee darkned with ſuch blinde devotions of ſuperſtitious brains: No, Gods art is able to invent waies often times more efficacy then ſuch as theſe, which indeed have a ſhew of Religion, in not ſatisfying the fleſh, but are brought in to oppoſe the power of Chriſt, who is a ſtronger man to caſt out Satan, then he is to hold his poſſeſſion: But Satan will never caſt out Satan, for then could not his kingdome endure. I conclude therefore upon theſe grounds, that till carnall reaſon and religion can be reconciled, (which is as hard as to yoke the Unicorne to the plow) Popery and Chriſtian Religion cannot ſtand together. So much for this third uſe.

Col. 3. ult.

Vſe 4. Terror to all that cleave to carnall reaſon.

A fourth uſe from hence, is Terror and Reproofe, to all that doe and reſolve to abide under the banner and conduct of carnall reaſon. Brethren, behold not your owne baſeneſſe onely in ſome few pranks of carnall reaſon, as in deviſing of excuſes and ſhifts to defend thy ſinne, or in rejecting Gods counſells and commands, or in cavilling againſt the promiſes: But take this mirror of thy curſed nature, thy perverted and degenerate reaſon, and ſee what an ugly hiew thou art of, in the ſight of God; a very naturall idiot is not more yrkeſome unto thee, and unfit for thy ſervice, through his perverted braine and croſſe fooliſhneſſe, then thou by this depravedneſſe and reaſon of underſtanding, haſt made thy ſelfe yrkeſome and odious to God, and unmeet for his ſervice. Conſider of it ſadly, although ſome reliques of reaſon are left in thee for thy naturall and civill courſes and ends, yet in the maine reſpect, and in that wherein thou

thou wert more excellent then all creatures, and bareſt Gods image about thee, I meane holy reaſon and pure underſtanding in divine matters, and for heaven, thou art moſt wretchedly debaucht of all other. Reaſon was ſet up in thee by thy creation, as a Queene in her throne, with her Scepter in her hand, furniſht with all excellency, to conceive and judge, affect and ſavour Gods righteouſneſſe and will, abhorring all other. But by old *Adam*, lo, ſhe is fallen into the hands of theeves, who have rifled & robd her of her beſt jewels; ſhe hath not loſt a few ſpangles & ornaments of her attire and dreſſe, but is depoſed from her royall eſtate, and the ſway ſhe bare over all the powers of the ſoule, will, affections and conſcience, (which were as her Peers and the Nobles of her Court) and above all the members of the body (which were as her ſubjects of lower ranke) but both under her authority, going, comming, and doing what ſhe pleaſed, in a moſt beautifull and comely agreement: But now ſhe hath loſt her government, they rather ſway her with their violence and impetuouſneſſe: For why? She hath loſt her ſubjection to God, her dignity is gone, and now in ſtead of ſpirituall cleare inſight into Gods myſteries, ſhee is left blinde, erroneous and perverſe: Not as a ſicke Phyſitian who hath all his skill ſtill, ſave that he is letted from the exerciſe of it by accident; but bereft both of power, will and skill altogether.

Come hither ye Pelagians and Anabaptiſts, and viſit this *Iezabel* throwne downe by her Eunuchs from her Tower, and daſht in peeces, ſo that none can ſay this is ſhe: Behold this widow ſitting as Tyrus in the aſhes of deſolation, and yet having no ſenſe of her loſſe, ſhe miſſes not one of her jewells, nor eare-rings, ſhe feeles not the loſſe of her Crowne and Scepter: Oh! wofull creature that was wont to bee inriched with ſuch choice pearles and goodly jewells, as all the earth had not the like, ſhall all the world, all the creatures, ſhall God and the Lord Jeſus, and his Miniſters and ſervants, bewaile and weep over her, ſaying, Oh, that thou ſaweſt what thou art ſtript off! And ſhall ſhe be ſenſleſſe of her poverty and nakedneſſe? Beloved, give me one carnall man or woman in all this aſſembly, that ever was troubled for this their miſery, and I will recant! Even as a poore man cuts his meate with the ſame ruſty knife wherewith he doth his worke, ſo one toole ſerves for all buſineſſe: looke with what inſtrument they bargaine and buy and ſell in the world, the ſame they go to worke withall in the moſt curious and holy ſervices of God: By it they judge, eſteeme, affect, practiſe; and all theſe they doe perverſly, miſtakingly, erroneouſly; and condemne all which ſorts not with them: Nay beſides this cloath hath taken a deeper dye and tincture, ſhee is plagued with other falſe principles of worldlings which make her bruti ſh, prophane & Atheiſticall, ſo that if we could ſee ſuch a one, Pelagian, Papiſt, or Machiavilian, in their true colours, we would thinke wee ſaw the Divell in the fleſh: Who would not tremble to ſee ſuch a ſight? Who abhorres not *Eſau* deſpiſing his birthright for his red pottage? Who loaths not a Papiſt in his carnall worſhip? And yet carnall reaſon (the roote of both) who trembles at? Who is moved to ſee ſots and ſwine to trample theſe Pearles of Religion under feet, at the trough of their owne draffe, profits and pleaſures? Who thinks ſuch wiſdome ſenſuall and divelliſh? Who ſaith with Chriſt, Get thee behinde mee Satan?

Carnall men handle Gods matters and their owne with the ſame tooles.

Satan? Thou ſavoureſt the things not of God, but of men? Thoſe ſavourleſſe wretches, whoſe God is their belly, and whoſe glory is their ſhame, whence came they, but out of this wombe? Nay (brethren) who thinke themſelves ſuch jolly ones as theſe? And yet (as wiſe as they are) to heare them talke of regeneration, Chriſt and faith, were a ſpectacle more ridiculous then any Pageant!

Matth.16.24. Phil.3.18.

Application of it.

Let therefore (I beſeech you) this terror ſinke into all your hearts, and carry rottenneſſe into your bones, who are ſicke of this diſeaſe: you ſhall not need the fever, dropſie or plague to deſtroy you; your bane is in your boſome: And will you cover it over with a faire ſute & not ſee it? Then I wiſh yee to looke upon that curſe of God which commonly haunts ſuch perſons. How did that wofull *Spira* by the counſell of the Popes legate and carnall reaſon, deny the truth? What made the halter to hang *Achitophel*? Did not carnall reaſon? Oh, (ſaith he) thy counſell is forſaken, *David* will prevaile; prevent death by murther! How doth God leave many a civill and morall fellow (that ſtood upon his carnall bottome) to reproachfull ſinnes? To ſtrike and kill in their wrath and ſo come to ſhame: To commit rapes and unnatûrall luſt, and ſo come to their ends: What examples have we ſeene of this in our Country? As if the Lord from heaven would bee avenged of all deſpiſers of Religion! How many of your morall and good natures are daily ſeduced to uncleanneſſe and drunkenneſſe? Oh! well may wee ſay, where is the Scribe? Where is the wizard of the world, that laies up for a rainy day, and ſaith, ſoule take thine eaſe? How ſuddenly is hee puld downe from all, and dyes like a foole? How doth God ſcatter the imaginations of ſuch as could make themſelves merry with diſdaine of Religion? And what fooles doth he make them? How many of your ambitious ones, dye beggars? How many of your reaching heads, engroſſers of farmes, trades, and ſuch as have many irons in the fire, come to the ſtate of banquerupts? And then, Oh! Puritans are wiſe men, for keeping within their bounds! But till ſad experience come, they will either have all, or loſe all. Here ſome of them are encumbred with ſutes at law which ruine them: Others defeated of their ambitious hopes, and being frowned upon by their betters, runne mad, or prove beggars, having loſt a hundred of pounds for moone-ſhine in waters; ſome hang themſelves: Others meet with potent oppoſites who cruſh them; others looking after gallants, get harlots into their boſomes; ſmall matters are too baſe for them, therefore great things muſt bane them: As *Saul* falſly of *David*, ſo may I truly ſay of this, they have choſen her to the confuſion of their own face! How are *Herods* croſſed and beaten down in magnifying their parts? Some Scholars at Univerſity loſing their wits for their proud aſpiring ſpirits: Others thinking to winne the ſpurres, have beene diſgraced by God in their Pulpits, their acts, ſtrucken dumbe, their wheeles taken off, and they made ridiculous, to teach others to be humble, and make conſcience the foundation of their wiſdome and learning: As that wofull and cruell King of France in his ruffe, would needs force one of his Nobles to take a ſtaffe and runne a tilt with him, and ſo one of the broken ſplinters running in at his eye, pierced his braine and kild him: So doth carnall reaſon put one weapon or other into Gods owne hand, by

1 Cor.1.16.

God befooles carnall reaſon.

Sad preſidents.

by which they runne with him till their owne throat is cut, and they destroyed. Oh! be all such abased in your selves, and become fooles that you may be wise, and that in time, before God prevent ye by his wrath, and so you wish it too late. This for Terror. I will adde some counsell after Reproofe.

Use 5. Reproofe in divers respects.

Another branch therefore, may be bitter reproofe to all sorts for their overmuch yeelding to the rule of this wofull mistresse carnall reason: I have toucht some particulars (by occasion) before; I will adde a few more here: I say, it should convince the consciences of us all that are before the Lord this day, for our arrerages of carnall reason: We should say as *Pharaohs* butler, Lord this day comes much of my sinne in this kind to my remembrance: O Lord, the branches of this stocke are infinite! How oft hath my base heart stumbled at the pureness, the closeness of thy waies, desiring the doore were opener for my carnall ease, liberty and breadth to goe in at? How oft have I thought my fine wits and China-mettall'd understanding too dainty for thy matters to meddle with? My parts too good to honour thee? How little have I laboured to submit my wit to thy will with gladness? How often have I stumbled at the simplicity of thy Ministers & servants, as too meanly gifted for my reach? How much ado have I with my cursed heart to profit by them, as not complying enough with my carnall expectation? How oft have I measured good things by their successe? Being ready rather to chuse sin with happinesse, then vertue with defeat and ill consequence? How weakely have I beene carried with partiality of heart towards the godly? Affecting them who have beene close, faithfull, friendly, usefull, beneficiall, welconceited of me, tender and indulgent, mercifull and bountifull, rather then others, who hath beene more estranged in affection, more ready to reprove my faults? How much adoe have I from restraining indignation from such as are aloofe from me, and little esteeme me? How seldome have I gone to heare publiquely or to take counsell, but I have rather sodered my faults, then desired that the righteous might smite me? How prone am I to looke at the greatnesse of some religious ones, and to make use of them in that kinde, rather then their good examples, and the savour of their grace? How weake have I (O Lord!) discovered my selfe to be, both in doing and suffering? In the one, being carried more with outward incouragements (hireling-wise) then upon a promise? If I have found my labours, my services, accepted with men, credit, countenance and maintenance following, how trim have my wheeles gone? If not, how heavy? In the sufferings I have had, how doe I seeke rather to licke my self whole by outward helpes and remedies, then by that hundred fold which thou hast promised to requite my losses withall? And though I have not runne to good witches, yet how have I clave to mine owne carnall reason? And seeming to have shot a gulfe, how have I beene drowned in a shallow.

Practice of carnall reason reproved in all sorts.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Oh! when I have found unkinde, unthankefull and base usage at the hands of them whom I have served in Ministry, counsell or helpfulnesse, how hardly, yea bitterly have I taken it? As if I had done it to bee thought well of, and not as one who had learned to undergoe good and bad report? How hath my arme shrunke it selfe in toward such? As if I had

8.

2 Kings

had ſerved an ill maſter who will conceale the labour of my love. Oh! yee Headburrowes, and Officers of Townes, let this truth of God convince yee: how doe you looke at pleaſing men, ſhunning ill will, aiming at ſerving your owne turnes and baſe ends, rather then at diſcharging duty in puniſhing offenders, both ſpirituall upon the Sabbath, and morall at other times, deſpiſers of the ordinances, ſwearers and drunkards? Is not this carnall wiſedome? elſe know not I what is. Alas! where is *David* ſpirituall reaſon, that bleſſed God for giving him an heart to build a Temple, and prepare ſtuffe for it, although it were the lot of *Salomon* to have the name of it? So God had it, how little cared he by whom? So Chriſt were preached, how little did *Paul* envie, or care by whom? And ſo againe, what is the common ſpeech of men? If I had ever hurt him, it would not have grieved me to bee ill ſpoken of, or dealt with by him. But alas! thou haſt more cauſe to bleſſe God for thy breaſt-plate of innocencie to ſhrowd thee from God his revenge. Thou ſhouldſt ſee God rather againſt thee for thy little reſpect to his Majeſty, in the ſincerity of thy ſpirit, then at man whom thou haſt not offended. So againe, how oft have our carnall hearts intruded themſelves upon Gods adminiſtrations, to cenſure him for the long ſuffering of the bad, and the croſſing of his owne in their zeale and good cauſe? Ah, poore worme! canſt thou comprehend Gods ends in thy fiſt? How doe wee Miniſters murmure and complaine, if wee doe no good? Why? are we above election, or ſervants to it? Is it well, not that wee are a ſweete ſavour in all? And ſo I might bee endleſſe.

9 10 11 12

Application of it.

Therefore I beſeech you in Gods feare, let this be a ſpeciall meane to humble us all for this our baſe enterfeering with God in his holy wayes, by our carnall reaſon. Oh! you who have been ſo ready to be led from God, by feare of parents diſpleaſure, loſſe of favour of betters, repent and breake your hearts: Miniſters who have betraid the cauſe of God by baſe time-ſerving, and pleaſing men, loathneſſe to ſuffer, Oh! repent of your carnall reaſon, & recover Gods loſſes ere ye dye. Oh! you that have choſen to ſave your livings, or lives, rather then Gods honour, conſider how ſmall your gaines have been, in loſing your ſoules for a mole-hill of earth.

Repent, O carnall wretch! who wouldeſt never bee brought to more religion then lay in the lap of thy carnall reaſon, not cut off a locke for God, not forgoe a petty oath for him, not loſe ſo much love of an huſband, a Landlord, as is worth two ſtrawes for him. Repent and be humbled, O thou that haſt fleerd and laught in thy ſleeve at the ſincere! Thou who haſt made Gods worſhip and profeſſion to ſerve thy turne, and ſold thy ſelfe by it, to credit, to cuſtome in ſhop, to good marriage by it, thy ſelfe being bad. Come out, O thou hypocrite, who (like *Abſalon*) haſt openly ſpread thy Tent, for the attaining of thine owne ends! Yee politicke projectors and cunning plotters for your owne gaines, enhanſing above others, though with an ill conſcience, and oppreſſing of the ſilly, humble your ſelves and be aſhamed! Take God and his people to witneſſe this day by your teares and mourning, that it is ſo. You that have come, and are ſtill comming to the Sacrament with carnall hearts,

for

for cuſtome, and to prevent the Court, or reproach, rather then conſcience, who have your hearts on the left hand, ſaying, I ſee nothing there to be had, it is no likely thing Abana can heale me, and Jordan can cure my leproſie! Me thinkes I feare I ſhall goe home as I come, and loſe my journey! Oh! above all others, repent yee of this carnall diſpute! *Naaman* repented: repent you, yee have ſinned with him, repent with him on Gods name. The Lord from heaven (beloved) ſhowre downe bleſſing, and convince your ſpirits of theſe and all other declenſions of yours by carnall reaſon.

Counſels added.

1. Let not the conceit of your Religion deceive you.

And to conclude, leſt yee ſhould thinke (any of you) that your diſeaſe is incurable, be ſtaid with a word or two of counſell. And firſt, beware leſt the conceit of your religion blind-fold your eyes, that ye ſhould not ſee how carnall yee are: it is not that which can ſave you harmleſſe. The ground is nought, and your blacke colour will take no other dye. What boots it that now and then you heare the Word? That will not alone mend you, as long as this boſome Oratour lodges within, which will in one night undoe as much as God hath done all the weeke. Offers, and wiſhes, and prayers, vaniſh where this Divell is harboured. Little *Iether* cannot kill *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*, great Giants. What is hail-ſhot to ſhoot downe a Fort? Or a ſpeare to the ſcales of Leviathan? As long as thou lieſt in this ſhip, thy going up and downe ſtops not her motion: thou art carried by it nevertheleſſe. Carnall reaſon is no torrent, ſoone up ſoone downe; but a gulfe which onely the Spirit of God can exhauſt and dry up.

Judg. 20. 8.

2. Counſell. Conſider the nature of it. Enmity to God.

Secondly, conſider well the nature of it: it is enmity to God, and perpetually oppoſite to his matters. The more ſpirituall the object, the more contrary is this. Till it be ſearcht to quick, tis ſmooth and quiet; but then it will flye in Gods face. *Gamaliel* adviſed his fellowes, Act. 5. to deſiſt, leſt they ſhould fight againſt God. Carnall reaſon dares do it; either at long ſword, or with a pocket dagger: Bee afraid therefore leſt God turne againe and fight againſt thee! As *Paul* ſaid to him that perverted the Law, ſo I to thee, Take heed God ſmite not thee, thou painted wall, that oppoſeſt his pureneſſe and ſpiritualneſſe. *Paul* ſeeing *Elimas* the Sorcerer, bent himſelfe againſt him, and ſaid, Oh! thou full of all malice and ſubtilty, how long wilt thou pervert Gods way? Stoop therefore to God, and prevent the wrath!

Acts 23. 3. 4.

Acts 13. 8.

3. Counſell. And the penalties attending the cuſtome of this evill.

1 Sam. 4. 9.

Thirdly, conſider whether Gods hand be not upon thee by ſome either ſpirituall penalty of a dead, hard, impenitent, ſcornfull ſpirit: or elſe temporall judgement upon thee, according as thy ſin lieth. When thou ſeeſt God really come againſt thee, play not the Philiſtin, to fight againſt him the ſecond time. God can vex thee even by them thou haſt ſcorned: He can force thee to conſult with a poore Miniſter for eaſe, ſcaring thy conſcience. If he doe ſo, reſiſt not. God delights to reſiſt the proud, and by mean things to beat downe mighty. Bee not as the Drunkard on the top of the maſt, who being beaten, felt not. God aimes (by conquering of thy maſterly carnall reaſon) to pull downe twenty more jolly fellowes. Once I knew one who was converted to God by an holy ſervant of his, and his converſion brought the whole Towne into order under Gods becke. For why? as *Ahabs* childrens guardians trembled

at

2 Kings

2 King.10.4.

at *Iehu*, when they ſaw two Kings could not ſtand: ſo theſe ſeeing one tall Cedar fall, and ſtoop with all his wiſedome, fell downe flat. Oh envie not the Lord this honour! make him and thine owne ſoule this amends! Entertaine but a ſuſpition at leaſt, that God will bee revenged. Brethren, Gods market growes low, this ware lieth upon our hand: let us take ſome handſell this day of ſome of yee; we will take any thing rather then ſit ſtill. If I could but draw a jealouſie and feare that all is not well with ſome of you; I ſhould goe home with gladneſſe. Oh! Doth God ſay, Not many great, learned, and wiſe are called? And doe not I tremble? O Lord am I one of theſe few? Say not, if there bee but three at Church to day touched, I will be one. It ſtands not in boaſting. Oh! that this needle might draw the thread after it.

1 Cor.1.12.

4. Counſell.

Fourthly know, that as hard as this leproſie is to be cured, the Lord is able to doe it. Looke upon *Naaman* in the 13. verſe. Yea, by the deſpiſed remedy of preaching, even a fooliſh way to fleſh. See thoſe propheſies, Eſay 25. ult. Hee ſhall pull away the cover of darkneſſe, and pull downe the lofty ones. So Eſay 24. Read alſo Ezek. 28. Though Tyrus ſate as a Queene, thought herſelfe wiſer then *Daniel*, having encreaſed her wealth and jewels; yet God ſaith, he would pull her downe. Labour that this pulling downe may be in mercie. But more of this in the uſe of exhortation, and the means there preſcribed. Thus much for theſe fourth and fifth uſes of Terror and Reproofe.

Vſe 6.
Exhortation.
1 Branch.
Give up our weapons of carnall Reaſon to God.
Job.42.2.

Now I proceed to the laſt uſe of Exhortation, and of Comfort, and Thankeſgiving annexed thereto, and ſo conclude the Doctrine. And therefore in the firſt place, I exhort all Gods people, that if formerly carnall reaſon, diſtruſt, and cavilling of heart have dogged them in matters of God: they would now at laſt (being thus convinced of the truth of God) ſtartle and ſhrugge at it, and ſay with *Iob* (in a like caſe) I have once ſpoke, but I will hold my peace, and lay mine hand upon my mouth. He had long jangled and cavilled with God, alledged for his owne innocencie, and ſeemed to call God to the Barre of his owne carnall reaſon. And as his freinds one way had cavilled againſt his uprightnes, by the miſery th at was upon him: So he on the contrary, cavilled againſt the juſtice of God, by juſtifying himſelfe. But the Lord approved neither of both, but ſent *Elihu* to be a moderator between them: And the Lord ſteps in himſelfe, and convinces them both; till at laſt *Iob* yeelds with confuſion of face, and comes in with abhorring himſelfe, and ſilence. Oh! this is (up and downe) our baſe ſpirit: we have long lived in an habituall contradicting of God, not onely in his croſſing of us, but in his ordinary walking toward us. Oh! how ſhould it humble & tame us! Oh! how ſhould we abhorre our cavilling ſpirits! The very Papiſt himſelfe is not more carnall then our ſpirit is: They cavill againſt a ſpirituall preſence of Chriſt in the Sacrament, and plead the words (*Hoc eſt corpus*) tooth and naile: They cry, Is it not the word, the very Text? (They can cleave to the Text when it ſeemes to ſerve their turne, but elſe they make it a noſe of waxe) And how eager are we againſt them for it, calling them Capernaits and Carnall? But meane time wee ſee not that carnall reaſon within our owne breaſts, which fights againſt Gods ſpirituall government and adminiſtrations. We cavill ſaying, If God were as hee promiſeth

miſeth, wee ſhould heare ſome reall voice from heaven, or ſee ſome glimſe of his preſence in an outward manner: Surely hee would declare from heaven who are for him, and who againſt him: His enemies ſhould not flouriſh and have their wills as they have, Goates ſhould not trample upon ſheep, ſurely he would judge the world in equity, & not ſuffer things to be ſo darkely carried. Indeed we have the word, and his promiſes ſounding in our eares, and his threats, but he followes them not really, with bleſſing the godly, nor deſtroying the wicked. Oh! thoſe were happy times, when the high Prieſts Ephod anſwered caſes, when God ſpake with voice and by miracles, viſions and Prophets! This ſcurſe is lodged in our boſomes, and we little ponder that, Heb. 1. 1. that now God ſpeaketh by his ſonne; as if he ſhould ſay, this manner of his revealing himſelfe, exceeds all other to a beleeving ſoule. Faith can make a reall preſence (though no carnall) both in ſacrament and in word preached, and in croſſes, and in the moſt hidden adminiſtrations of God in the Church: But it is this curſed carnall reaſon, which darkens all, and cauſes every object to be like the glaſſe through which we behold it.

Carnall reaſon wiſhes old waies in ſtead of a promiſe.

To returne therefore, if thou have beene a man given to thine appetite, put thy knife henceforth to thy throate, and ſtand not to defend or maintaine it againſt the Lord: Beſtow no more wit to cavill, but fight againſt thy infidelity: *Sarah* laughed behinde the doore at the meſſage of the Angel, but ſhe was aſhamed of it, & ſhe is ſaid by faith to conceive ſeed, ſhe had caſt out carnall reaſon, ere ſhe could breed by the promiſe. If thou ſee a difficulty in the promiſe which thou canſt not match, yet turne thy ſtruggling againſt thy ſelf, and give glory to God in ſhaming thy ſelf, that ſo thou maieſt give him more in beleeving. Oh what ſhould it boot me to heare men ſay, I have as morall a people as any are; except it may be added, as ſpirituall alſo, what joy can be? morall and carnall civility, and rationall Religion may well agree: truly this taint is deeply feſtred into moſt of us: No congregation (for this fifty years) hath been ſo beaten and ſtaved off from carnall reaſon, a life of ſenſe, and unbeleefe as this; and therefore looke to it, Satan will more rejoyce in your fleſh, then in any other: if he can rule in you by the ſcepter of carnall reaſon (as truly he doth in moſt of us) Oh! how will he crow upon his dunghill, and exalt himſelfe above the truth of God ſo long preached! Give over this ſtrong hold, forſake and ſurrender this caſtle for God, ſticke no longer to it: ſay thus, If I cannot beleeve as I would, yet I will ſet my marke upon Gods word, I will honor ſuch as can: Gods truth ceaſes not to be faithfull, becauſe I am unbeleeving! God keepe me from being unfaithfull, that it may be true to me; Alas! if God ſpake never ſo really from heaven, what were it without faith? And when *Thomas* put his finger into Chriſts ſides, what had he gained by it, if ſtill unfaithfull? God hath made himſelfe cleare to me by more expreſſions then to many; I have had more patience, deliverances, bleſſings, redemptions, then many; I have touched and taſted the Lord, and groped him with hands, and yet unbeleefe hath made all unſavoury: So that I ſee it muſt be faith and not carnall reaſon which muſt prevaile. For then Iſrael in the wilderneſſe had never beene barred from Canaan by unbeleſe: Oh therefore! I am weary of this wofull enemy: I could

Heb. 11.

You of this congregation looke to it.

Joh. 21.

2Kings

could put tenne cavillers to ſilence, ere I could ſet carnall reaſon at a nonplus; ſhe hath a fountaine within her ſpringing up to death, and is never weary. But Oh Lord! pardon what is paſt, and through mercy for the time to come, I ſhall turne a new leafe! Oh! that I could (nay the Lord) prevaile but thus farre with you! I dare not leave you here; But Oh! that you who are not come ſo farre as this, might at leaſt attaine this!

2. Branch. Exhortation. We muſt bee Gods fooles ere we be wiſe to ſalvation.

Secondly, therefore let me draw ye one ſteppe further, and that is, to be a foole in thy ſelfe, that thou maiſt be made wiſe. The ſunne never riſeth, but ye ſhall perceive a dimneſſe and blackneſſe caſt upon the aire, though the moone and ſtarres ſhine never ſo brightly before. So where the light of divine wiſdome approacheth, it cauſeth all the wiſdome of fleſh to vaniſh as ſmoke before it: And this the Lord of purpoſe effects in all whom he converts, as he rehe did to *Naaman*. He will make all fleſh to be as graſſe, and all the beauty of it as ſtubble, that he may ſhine onely in the ſoule, and that the Kingdome may be the Lords. It is (I confeſſe) as

Joh. 3.5.

ridiculous to us, as that a man ſhould enter againe into his mothers wombe: But ſuch a change muſt there be; the fruit in the wombe undergoeth not more alteration, ere it ſee the light, then carnall reaſon muſt doe ere the ſoule be begotten to God: It muſt be with it, as with a ſcholar that would learne a poore trade; he muſt lay downe all his learning, and ſtoop to be an idiot in that ſcience till he be taught it: It muſt even be as the Jeſuits novice is to his ſuperior, whatſoever he teaches him, or enjoynes him (be it never ſo repugnant) hee muſt ſubmit, he muſt have no underſtanding, cavills or objections againſt it, but freely ſuffer himſelfe to be led into the ſtreame of authority, and captivate all feares, unlikelyhood, dangers, to the blinde obedience of governours; he muſt ſay the Crow is white, and the Swan blacke, yea even ſuffer his ſenſes and braines to be knockt out, that he may be a true novice, a wiſe Catholicke: no Jeſuit will elſe have to doe with him, if he ſay not yea to his aſſertions, and nay to his denialls, if he be not ready in all things to aſſent. This I affirme of them as moſt unnaturall (for Religion expells not reaſon, but rectifies the carnality of it) but yet (in a ſort) the Lord requires no leſſe in point of carnality, then they doe in point of reaſon it ſelfe.

1 Cor.1.15.

The Lord will triumph over it, and ſay, where is the Scribe? The wiſe man? He will cauſe this wiſdome to become very madneſſe, ere ever he commit the ſeed of true wiſdome to it, and the ſoul hearing principles of Chriſt and faith, muſt chaine up cavilling, and thruſt her eies into Gods boſome, profeſſing to know nothing in any myſtery of Religion, ſave that which truth reveales; and having (as *Ionathan* by his

Pſal.73.15.

honey) received ſight, he muſt cry out, Oh, foole that I was! Oh, beaſt in thy ſight, Oh Lord! Oh, now I appeare a very foole to my ſelfe, and perceive that darkeneſſe cannot comprehend it ſelfe, till a light of God be held into the dungeon, and then it falls downe as *Saul* with that light

Act. 9.

which ſhone about him, and ſaith, what wilt thou have me to doe? I am

1 Sam.3.

as thou wilt have me; my wiſdome, my wit, ſhall be thine, ſpeake Lord and thy ſervant heareth: he that formerly ſhould have perſwaded me of this, might as eaſily have forced me to ſay, it is light at midnight; But

Lord

Lord now I am a foole in my ſelfe, meerly empty of mine owne ſenſe, and wholly thine, addicted to ſweare to thine edicts, and if thou ſpeak the word, I lay hand upon mouth, and have done: This is to be as a little child whom ye may winne to ſay what ye liſt: Oh! this is the next way to make thee wiſe to ſalvation! This is to be unto Gods wiſdome as the Queene of Sheba was to *Salomons*, even to have no ſpirit left in her: Oh! thou muſt ſay with *David*, My fingers ſhall forget to play, and loſe all cunning.

Thirdly, thou muſt ſo be ſtript of all thine owne, as yet thou muſt not be a meere void and empty one of all other wiſdome: But the word of truth muſt be ſhed as ſeed into thy ſoule, and the principles thereof muſt be infuſed into it, to informe it, and to create (of nothing) a new nature of divine light into it: I ſay, as they ſpake, in Act. 23.7. If an Angell from heaven have revealed any thing from heaven to him, we will not gaineſay it. Theſe words the Phariſees uſed of ſet purpoſe to oppoſe the Sadduces who denyed Angels and ſouls of men. So muſt thou: That which hath beene moſt contrary to thy wiſdome, muſt now bee all in all: Now thou muſt oppoſe thy ſelfe thus, If God have revealed any truth of his from heaven, I will ſooner caſt thee out, then reſiſt it: Be thou as parties who put their matters to compromiſe: They are firſt bound in bonds to ſtand to award. So doe thou, binde thy carnall reaſon as a dogge to the ſtake, that it ſtirre not a foote, nor once mute while God is ſpeaking: yea doe thus with gladneſſe, as poore men are glad to be bound to arbitrement, becauſe they deſire an end: So thou, becauſe thou deſireſt to be ſavingly wiſe, be glad there is ſuch a word of truth ſhining in a darke place, and open all windows to let it in, do not ſtop any crevis of light which might enter, but greedily attend, ſtudy, meditate in this word, till the Lord thereby have let it into thoſe darke corners of the heart, that was before in the ſhadow of death; and till the truth doe incorporate with thine underſtanding, and cauſe the ſcales of darkeneſſe to fall off, as *Pauls* did, that thou maieſt ſee cleerely thoſe things that concerne thy peace: All the fogs, miſts, and cavills of carnall reaſon being ſcattered: Oh! let her interrupt the Lord as ſhe will, yet the ſoule knowes whither to goe for deciding the queſtion; ſhe will not forfeit her bond, by which ſhee is bound to ſtand to the laſt deciſion of the word.

3. Branch. Word of truth muſt caſt the ſeed of God into the ſoule, when once emptied of her ſelfe.

Fourthly, get the ſpirit of the Lord Jeſus into thy ſoule, who is the active worker of true and ſanctified wiſdome in the renued ſoule: According as the Apoſtle tells us, He is made unto us of the Father wiſedome &c. He enlightens every one that comes into the world with true light, being that light which the ſoule muſt come by to the Father, whoſe light cannot elſe be approached: By the fleſh of the Lord Jeſus the ſoule is made capable of this light of the word; elſe there is no capableneſſe: And the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus workes the ſoule into this light, becauſe it reveales him unto it, in the myſtery of reconciliation and forgiveneſſe: For why? Till the ſoule be made wiſe to ſalvation, all her wiſdome is only in the brain, & will not hold: The Spirit of Chriſt therefore lets into the heart as well as the head of the beleever this light, and conveies the goodneſſe, warmth and ſweet of it, into the ſoule, and that

The fourth. The Spirit of the Lord Jeſus muſt create holy wiſdome in the ſoule. Joh. 1. 18.

2Kings

it is, which cauſes it to dwell in the ſoule, and to be an immortall and unſcaying light, which ſhall abide to eternall life, till the ſoule ſee light in Gods light; elſe the light of the Hypocrite, is but a violent and dim twilight, cauſed rather by a neceſſity of conviction, then a powerfull perſwaſion. Therefore apply thy ſelfe eſpecially to ſuch helpes as may bring Chriſt into thy ſoule; The ſight of his ſalvation to thy ſoule is the quinteſſence of ſpirituall wiſdome; this will cauſe thee to grow in all light when once thou art enlightned in the myſtery of acknowledging Chriſt to be thy Saviour: For why? This will teach thee that Chriſt is all godlineſſe in a myſtery; all the whole truth of God is lapped up in him, as his infants body was lapped up in cloaths and ſwathbands: Elſe all knowledge is but a gueſſing and conjecturall thing: count it then thy chiefe wiſdome to be wiſe in eſcaping the ſnares of death, and in beleeving unto ſalvation: Oh! who ſhall bring me where I ſhall heare a Sermon of Chriſt, to pardon me, to reconcile me to God! If faith in the Lord Jeſus once turne thy ſtream, and carry thee with a fuller ſway to heaven, then all thy worldly wit carried thee before, to thy cavills and objections, there is hope, thou haſt well quitted thy ſelfe of carnall reaſon.

Ephe.1.18.

Faith the true eye to behold the myſteries of ſalvation.

Fifthly, looke with the eye of faith into all the myſteries of godlineſſe, to beare downe carnall reaſon: No myſtery can be underſtood without faith. The Spirit of God workes faith firſt, as that inſtrument, whereby the ſoule is led into all the ſecrets of God: Faith by a promiſe will make carnall reaſon ſtand by as a very foole. Hence it is, that the ſpirituall man is ſaid to judge all things, even the hidden things of God: And yet to be judged of no man: Why? Becauſe the light of faith, is the higheſt light: All other lights are of a lower kinde: And hence it is, that a carnally wiſe man comming to heare a poore ſoule to ſpeake (by the light of faith) touching the matters of God, ſtands as a man aſtoniſhed, and as a foole in the preſence of a wiſe man. For why? The Spirit which revealed the promiſe of ſalvation, reveales therewith all other promiſes, and all parts of the will of God: So then, I ſay, in the fifth place, let faith ſubdue thy reaſon, and ſhew thee a reall ſenſibleneſſe, ſavour and wiſdome in all the matters of God: By her eye, judge of the Sacraments, diſcerne the reall preſence of Chriſt there, (though not really carnall) behold a ſacramentall union betweene him and the Elements, for the carrying of the ſoule into an union with him and all his graces: Faith in the promiſe of the ordinance, will as well give thee a ſpirituall ſavour in Chriſt ſacramentall, as ever it did in thy reconciliation: Both being planted upon a word of God, whereto the Sacrament is an inſeperable and ſure ſeale: Let carnall reaſon judge of a Sacrament, and what will it make of it? A peece of bread, a cup of wine: She beleeves no more then ſhe ſees: What wonder? A man may draw water out of a deepe well without a bucket, as eaſily as a carnall man can gather ſap or ſavour out of the Sacrament, except Chriſt be his wiſdome and righteouſneſſe: Spiritualneſſe in the firſt promiſe, taſted by faith, gives a reliſh to the ſoule in all other parts of the word: And ſo I might ſpeake of each part of ſanctification. Faith onely can get a ſpiritualneſſe out of each promiſe of God, to purge the ſoule of her corruptions: To guide her

1 Cor.3.

her in her way: To anſwer her doubts, her feares, her objections: To ſupport her in her croſſes and ſtraits: To ſeaſon her bleſſings, and to preſerve her unblameable untill the day of her ſalvation. A carnall man ſavours no more of theſe, then a dog ſavours a chip; for he wants that whereby ſuch priviledges are ſpiritually revealed. Shee harkens not to the word, (as the Pilot neglected *Paul*, Act. 27.) But *Paul* had the revealing of the ſafety of the ſhip which the Pilot wanted, and therefore ſlighted the Pilots judgement farre more then he could doe *Pauls*.

Savour ſpirituall things.

Sixthly, I exhort thee to ſavour ſpirituall things, and to be able to prove thou doſt ſo, and that thou art made truly wiſe for ſpiritualneſſe. *Queſt.* How may I prove it? *Anſw.* By theſe few markes. Firſt, ſuch Sermons, Ordinances, Miniſteries, as ſavour moſt of ſpirit and life, affect and enſue; ſuch as ſavour of fleſh and baſeneſſe, forme and carnall reaſon, reject and deteſt: Read and heare the word, with ſeeking out the true ſcope and true ſavour thereof, prying into it, as the Cherubins into the mercy ſeat, not reſting in the barke and ſurface: Bleſſe God for any wiſdome to weigh and judge aright of holy things, and their difference; cleave to a ſpirituall worſhip of God, and abhorre a carnall ſerving of God: Heare the word with humility, faith, attention, obedience; for to the humble and trembling at his word God reveales wiſdome, Pſal. 25. Eſay 28. Prepare thy ſelfe reverently to the ſacraments, with faith, repentance, love and hunger: whatſoever ſavours of fleſh, as pride, pompe, eaſe, ſelf-ends, world, pampering of the body, ſuſpect it not to be from God. Learne with *Paul*, 2 Cor. 5. to accept Chriſt according to ſpirituall, not carnall reſpects. It is death to the ſpirit to be carnall, or the fleſh to be ſpirituall, but to the ſpirit, it is life, Rom. 8.

2. Love ſimplicity.

Secondly, love ſimplicity: It is a companion of ſpiritualneſſe; get the one, and the other will follow. Affect not a ſubtill, overreaching, cloſe and worldly-wiſe converſation. It will juſtly cauſe Gods people to ſuſpect thee: Let not a double, winding, ſhifting heart and practice be found in thee, either to God or man-ward. Wiſdome I diſlike not, ſeaſoned with grace and meekeneſſe, but carnall and politique wiſdome of the world abhorre: we are called Proteſtants, Profeſſors, bee not aſhamed to be according to our name: let us be without welt or gard, not bordering upon defence of evill, or cavilling againſt the reproofes of the word: Be not ſimple onely in point of Religion, but alſo among the Religious; Be not aſhamed of God, or of Gods faithfull ones, for their meanneſſe. Better is he that walketh in his ſimplicity, then he that perverts his way and is a foole. Condeſcend to meane things, Rom. 12. Gods pretious ones come out of cottages, yea ſometime caves and dens of the earth.

3. Labour for heavenly mindedneſſe.

Thirdly, labour for heavenly mindedneſſe, Phil. 3. Col. 3. 2. Our converſation is in heaven. Let your affections be above, where Chriſt ſitteth: Reſurrection of the ſoule with Chriſt, and an holy activeneſſe of ſpirit with fruitfulneſſe, is a ſteppe to the ſoules aſcenſion with Chriſt, and converſe with God. This world full of carnall occurrences of profits, pleaſures, companies, earthly courſes and delights, will make the moſt ſavoury Chriſtian forget himſelfe, without great grace. Be armed

2 Kings

therefore againſt this temptation: Know theſe things well and behold them aright, they are nothing, happineſſe is not in them, they promiſe, but keep not touch; uſe them therefore as if thou uſedſt them not, as wings upward, not as clogs; let them be as water, and grace as oyle, which will ſwimme aloft; paſſe through them as that freſh river is ſaid to goe through the ſalt ſea, without taſte or brackiſhneſſe: If grace bee chiefe, ſhee will be a true moderator betweene theſe things and the world; but if the world be chiefe, ſhee will ſo bribe and bewitch thee, that the beſt things will loſe all ſavour and welcome in a ſhort time.

4. Preferre the words verdit.

Fourthly, heare the word, before the judgement of reaſon in all the promiſes and governments of God, perſonall or publique: Cenſure not God as unrighteous. It came from God that *Abſolon* ſhould preferre the judgement of *Huſhi*, that he might overthrow both him, and *Achitophell*. Say of carnall reaſon, as he did, the judgement of it is not good in caſe: And when *Achitophell* hath counſelled, then call for *Huſhi*, and ſay, I dare not truſt carnall reaſon: Is there never a Prophet of the Lord, *Baals* Prieſt are too pleaſing to be faithfull in this caſe. So much for ſpiritualneſſe.

5. Be wiſe in all thy courſe.

Laſtly, bee wiſe in thy whole courſe. *Queſt.* How ſhall I try it? *Anſw.* If firſt thou have the properties of a man truly wiſe: As firſt to chuſe the one thing neceſſary: To diſcerne betweene things that differ: To be ready for the hardeſt: To make ſafe thy retreat. Secondly, true wiſdome is planted in Gods feare. Eccleſ. laſt Deut. 4.6. Thirdly, ſhunne the waies of error, to diſcerne betweene the way of the foole and the wiſe. Col. 1.9. Fourthly, practiſe wiſdome, both in deliberation for God, and in determination. Pſal. 119. 57. More fully be wiſe for thy ſoule and ſelfe. Matth. 6.23. Redeeming the time, Epheſ. 5.18. Project and plot ſavourly, ſeaſonably and wiſely for God and his glory and ends. Rom. 8. Savour the things of God, and be wiſe for God, are all one in the Greeke word. Uſe all watchfulneſſe againſt all enemies, eſpecially ſpirituall. Marke 13.34. Meddle with our owne buſineſſe, finding ſtill enough to doe at home, 2 Theſſ. 3.10. elſe we be inordinate and buſiebodies, as *Peter*, Joh. 21.21. Be ſure in all caſes of doubt, to cleave to things holy, pure, of good report. Phil. 4.8. A comprehenſive rule. Of two morall evills chuſe not the leſſe, but abhorre both: Of two evills, the one of ſinne, the other of ſorrow, chuſe the latter though great, rather then the former though leſſe. Rom. 3.8. Let things of profit and pleaſure yeeld to things honeſt. 1 Tim. 6.6. Truſt not men upon faire pretences, but firſt trie them. Be neither ſtout to beleeve nothing, nor credulous to beleeve any thing. Theſe may ſerve for a taſte, leſt I digreſſe too far. Thus much for the uſe of Exhortation.

1 Theſſ. 4. 12.

Vſe 7. Silly ones have an advantage about carnall reaſon.

Now for the other two of encouragement and comfort. Firſt, let this point encourage the ſimple, poore, meane in wit and parts, that though they be caſt out as *Ipſa* Judg. 20. from their brethren, and as the poore blind man, Joh. 9. Yet the Lord Jeſus will not forſake them: They want exceſſe of wiſdome, but they alſo are thereby rid of much carnality, and ſavour of the fleſh; and ſo their enmity to God, is the leſſe. Defects have made many happy; they had periſhed if not periſhed. A reverend man of God, once ſaid, it was well for him he was lame on his hand, for elſe

elſe he had never (in ſhew) beene either Miniſter or Chriſtian. Many husbands who have wives, and wives who have husbands of leſſe pregnancy and parts then others, let them know, that in this defect, they have a bleſſing, they have the leſſe carnall oppoſition to encounter in each other, and the Divell hath the leſſe colour to tempt them to ſhrewiſh, diſcontented and churliſh behaviour. I know that fillineſſe is a want in nature; yet I ſay, weakneſſe in parts (if there be any competency of underſtanding) may as ſoone attaine grace, as greater abilities: I dare not ſay, that in fillineſſe it ſelfe there is any praiſe; for the ſilly lye open another way to bee ſeduced both by too much credulity, and levity in minde and manners. But this I ſay, if God pleaſe to worke, the fort of carnall reaſon is more weake in ſuch, and ſooner ſhot downe. As I ſay of them whoſe wealth, credit, learning, birth and dexterity is ſmall, and cannot greatly commend them to the world; ſo I ſay alſo of theſe, both the account they are to make to God is leſſe, and their obſtacles to beleeving are not ſo ſtrong as others. Is it not a cauſe of bleſſing God, that he hath removed thoſe braſen barres which doe ſo hold out faith in others? Although then (poore ſoules) ye are ſlighted in the world, yet if ye caſt up your recknings right, you may ſay, Lord ſeeing it is no better, I thanke thee it is no worſe: Except I ſaw more of the witty and wiſe to prove Religious then doe, I thinke it is well enough as it is; I ſee the leaſt dramme of grace is ſo pretious, and great parts doe need ſo great a meaſure of it; I cannot but ſet mine heart at reſt, and content my ſelfe with my portion. I know Lord thou art not an hard Maſter to gather and reape, where thou neither ſtraweſt nor ſoweſt; Thou requireſt no more then according to the abilities thou giveſt; If I have poore gifts, yet I bleſſe thee for fewer lets: In this reſpect, I can digeſt my weake apprehenſion, judgement, memory and parts, and withall the diſrepute of the world; I would not for all the worldly wiſdome of the ungodly, change that ſimple facility of my heart to ſtoope to the word, and to ſubmit to the truths of God.

So long as I ſee Religion to conſiſt in the denying of ſomewhat, rather then in the addition of any thing, I ſhall not murmure, that I have bought ſome vacancy of diſtempers, cavillings and reſiſtings of grace, with the paring of ſome ſuperfluities which may be ſpared, counting them happy deffects, ſince thou wilt have it ſo. I ſee although no excellency of man can reſiſt thee, if thou wilt abaſe it to the ſimplicity of Chriſts, 2 Cor. 10. yet not many ſuch are called, 1 Cor. 1. but rather ſuch as have little to loſe, and are glad that Chriſt will owne them, Matth. 11. 6. Mutter not at the worldly wiſe, their portion and jollity, for you know not with what lets they are encumbred. Alas! they muſt firſt conſult long with their carnall wiſdome, and if that gainſay, they muſt obey; and how long will it be ere your ſtout hearts and ſtomacks will come down? God muſt take them as the ſhe-wilde Aſſe in her monthes, when they are in ſtraits, if he will have ought from them: Oh! they muſt have the good will of their jolly and gallant wives, or husbands, or kindred, they muſt conſult with their greatneſſe, and what carnall inconveniences follow the profeſſion of the Goſpel: If theſe conſent not, they cannot come: If old cuſtomes, gamings, companionſhips, meriments, their proud wives, uſurious

Religion ſtands as much in denying of ſomewhat as the enjoying of it.

2 Kings

Act.26.

Ruth ult.

rious courses, great buſineſſe in the world will not ſtand with this ſimplicity, they muſt not meddle. *Agrippa* was in more chains upon the throne, then *Paul* at the bar in this kinde; he was almoſt perſwaded, but his clogs of ſtate and bravery pulled him backe: A world of Lions is in the way, no hope to overcome them. The lands of Elimelec they would have, but *Ruth* they will not marry; one objection or other is againſt it. And therefore I conclude, you that want theſe pulbacks, beare the more indifferently ſome defects: They who will not ſow till weather be good, may ſtand out altogether; but your coaſt is alwaies cleare: Bleſſe God, wonder at your lot, and ſay, Lord why ſhould ſuch a plaine *Iacob* bee choſen, and Duke *Eſau* refuſed? A poore limping, halting creature be preferred to ſuch a Potentate! A poore *David* choſen from the ſheepe, and a tall *Eliab* rejected? The rich gueſts excluded, and poore beggers under hedges and in high wayes welcome! truly becauſe the Lord hath choſen them to confound greatneſſe and carnall reaſon: Oh! I bleſſe thee (O father) for it, even ſo it is, becauſe thou pleaſedſt ſo to have it.

2. Branch. Thankſgiveing due to God for freedome.

And to finiſh the uſe, let me adde a word of conſolation to all Gods people, and preſſe them to bleſſe God, that they have ſhot this gulfe: God hath not done little for ſuch: How many have been left drowned in this whirlepoole, your ſelves eſcaping? It is a token, God meanes to impart himſelfe yet more familiarily unto you, and come in and ſup, yea dwell with you, (being humble and broken) becauſe he hath taken downe ſuch a vaile of ſeparation, a wall of defiance in you: He hath caſt downe your high things, that you might ſtoope to the obedience of Chriſt: Returne with *Naaman* and bee thankefull. No patient owes ſo much to a Phyſitian for his cure in a deſperate caſe, as thou to the Lord: yea by this cure of carnall reaſon, beleeve and get experience with *David* for time to come, He that ſaved me from the Beare and Lion, will alſo ſave me from this Philiſtin: Get hope and confidence that God will caſt out thoſe remnants and roots of this poiſon which yet abide; hold downe your corky, bubbling fleſh daily, your ſparke wits, ripe heads, experience and abilities; Implore ſtill the ſame ſad hand of the ſpirit to ſuppreſſe them from pearking up, you ſhall finde, it will not quite leave you till death; but be not diſcouraged; It had the birthright firſt, and birthrights hold long. *Iacob* had recovered the right of birth, when *Iſaac* bleſſed him, yet it was five hundred yeares ere he got poſſeſſion; in the meane time *Iacob* was a priſoner and ſlave in Egypt, a pilgrim in the wilderneſſe, and in Canaan, no Lord over Edom, till *David* and other Kings ſubdued it. But ſeeing it was *Iacobs* by promiſe, he got it at laſt; and ſo ſhalt thou at death, though the whiles thou be held down mightily by thy enemy, as *Hannah* with *Peninnah*. Truſt God, that neither thy owne corruption within, nor yet the world and error of the wicked without, with all their carnall jollity ſhall pluck thee from thy ſincerity: That which hath beene the bane of thouſands, zealous Miniſters, Magiſtrates, Gentlemen, Courtiers, Citizens, Lawyers, Students, and others, yet ſhall not be thine, if thou wilt cleave to God! Oh! beware leſt Satan conſpiring with thy carnall heart diſguiſe thee not, and make thee a time-ſerver! When thou ſeeſt ſo many of thy time and parts, education, diſpoſition, kindred and family, ſtill to be left to their cavills, deſcants,

deſcants, and the ſtreame of unmortified reaſon, loathing and ſcorning to ſtoop to the conditions of Chriſt either to doe for him, or to ſuffer: Oh! be thankefull and thinke thy ſtate happy, whom God pulled as a legge out of a Beares jaw, or a brand out of the fire; and conſider how much better it is to beare now and then a ſquib for thy Religion, then to bee made a booty to the Divell for thy revolting. Thus much for this and the reſt of the uſes belonging to this doctrine.

Anſwer to a maine quære. *Queſt.* 1. Whether carnall policy be unlawfull. *Anſw.* Yes: As appeares by the particulars.

Now I muſt not forget my promiſe (beloved) and by ſo fit an occaſion I muſt anſwer a queſtion, and that is this, May not carnall reaſon in any caſe be uſed? If not, how farre may policy be admitted with ſafety of conſcience, and in what particulars? For the firſt; carnall reaſon if convinced ſo to be, (for ſometime lawfull policy may ſeeme to be carnall, and yet is not) is ſimply unlawfull. As may appeare by theſe particulars.

1. Politicke and crafty ſhifting.

Firſt, politicke ſhifting with an officious lye, or an handſome ſudden evaſion, though againſt truth. Thus the midwives made a lye to avoid the murther of the Iſraelitiſh women: True it is, the Lord covered it in mercy, becauſe the ſcope and end was holy, and tending to charity; and it ſaid, the Lord built them houſes, yet not for their lying, but for their mercy. The like I ſay touching the woman that concealed *Ahimaaz* and *Ionathan*, ſaying, They were gone over the brooke, when they were in the Well: So *Rahab* hid the ſpies, and is commended for it, Heb. 11. but not for her lye, ſaying that they were gone. I ſay not, that they ought to have diſcovered them, nor doe I ſay it is eaſie to anſwer the queſtion, what ſhould be done in that or the like caſes (the Lord keepe us from ſtraits and from horned occaſions and hard exigents which are both waies difficult) but I ſay, theſe things are not lawfull, we leave the diſpenſation and iſſue of ſuch things to God, to whom only mercy and pardon belongs, when the ſoule hath offended by a kinde of neceſſity. But to affirme that God may be, or is pleaſed by a lye, or needs it, were horrible. Now then if a ſhift or a lye for a good end, a weighty and holy end, yet cannot be maintained as warrantable, what ſhall thoſe carnall ſhifts be counted, which wicked men uſe to conceale themſelves, when their owne lewdneſſe hath brought them into ſtraits? As *Ieroboams* wives policy to diſguiſe herſelfe going to the blinde Prophet, and making herſelfe another, becauſe ſhe feared *Ahija*, for her Idolatry. So *Sauls* diſguiſing himſelfe when he went to the witch, and making himſelfe another, leſt elſe his wicked purpoſe had been defeated. And the like may be ſaid of the ordinary lyes and mannerly ſhifts uſed to ſerve mens owne turnes, when there is either a denyall of a truth, or affirmation of a falſhood: As when a ſervant for ſome reſpects doth anſwer ſhiftingly to any that ſhall call for his Maſter, and aske whether he be within, or at home; and ſhall either deny it, or further adde, he is gone to ſuch a place, being yet falſe; of which ſort are infinite other tricks in common uſe among men, and counted veniall toyes; as in promiſing to goe to ſuch a place, to doe ſuch a thing, to come to a friend (no limitation ſet downe) and yet faile, &c.

2. Politicke cloſeneſſe and neutrality.

Secondly, politicke cloſeneſſe, darkeneſſe, and reſerved neutrality to go no further in Religion, then we can come off faire and make our own retreat

2 Kings

retreat safe, without endangering of our selves in any kinde: obeying the commands of men, by disobeying God. This is a reall falshood of heart and practice, which we call temporising, comming from a base deceitfulnesse of the spirit to God-ward; and is a deserting of God and his cause; yea though it be through feare or frailty, as *Peters* deniall, and the revolt of many that suffered in time of persecution: But much more when either no danger, or not so great is to be feared. Sutable whereto is that cunning temporising that lookes at the displeasing of men more then God, as when *Peter* at Antioch ate meates forbidden by the ceremony, (as confessing an abrogation) and yet when there came Jewes thither, he withdrew and abstained from them, to avoid quarrelling.

Gal. 2.

3. Politicke carnall equivocations and reservations.

Thirdly, politick reservation of conscience in the actuall committing of an evill: As in Queene *Maries* time, many would goe to Masse with their bodies, pretending to keepe their consciences entire and undefiled: Sutable whereto is the practice of our Jesuits in their equivocations, whether in their oathes or other actions, when they sweare in word, but say they reserve themselves mentally unsworne and meant it not, or by some trick of exception which they suggest to themselves, *viz.* That such a one went not this way, pointing to their sleeve; or that they were not in such a place of company, meaning to betray it to others, &c.

4. Politicke selfe-love.

Fourthly, politicke indirectnesse of course, swerving from providence and duty, for a mans owne indemnity; as when *David* fearing the Philistins, (who discovered him to be their enemy) and distrusting Gods protection, let his spittle fall downe upon his beard, and scrabbled upon the doores, so that he was thereupon taken as a mad man by *Achish*, and so escaped. So the Papists have a trick which they call good guile (much what the same when we call an honest theefe or knave, who is not altogether so bad as others) and say, thereby they doe great matters both for publique and private good ends.

1 Sam. 21. 13.

5. Formall policy.

Fifthly, formall policy, when men (*proforma* as they call it) or for their fee, will plead a bad cause, or having beene retained on the one side, will afterward speake for the other, which is the sinne of Ambodexters, Sycophants, and flatterers, who speake on both sides for their vantage.

6. Politicke prophanenesse.

Sixtly, politick prophaneneſſe, as *Achitophel*, who for the making way for his Masters purpose, plaid the traytor against his liege, besides the horrible impieties committed against God.

7. Politicke Religion.

Seventhly, politicke Religion (which I touched before) when men devise out of their own brain, a way to devotion, as if Gods course were insufficient, as for perswading of chastity, to debase marriage under virginity: To teach men diligent use of the means, by overthrowing the absoluteneſſe of Gods decree; (as if these two were incompatible) To provoke men to liberality to begging Friars, by affirming Christ himselfe was a beggar: To draw people to punctuall confessing of sinne, by enjoyning auricular confession: To avoid looseneſſe of lust, by commanding penances and fasts beside the word: To put an hereticke to silence, by falsifying a text, as one of the Fathers to stop the mouth of the Manichees, affirming two contrary principles of good and evill, out of 2 Cor. 4. 4. answers it thus, In whom God (the true God) hath blinded the eies

2 Cor. 4. 4.

of

of the unbeleevers of this world tranſpoſing the Genitive caſes, and marring the ſenſe; ſo putting out both Gods eies, to put out one of the Divells: So to maintaine a carnall point with blanching it over with many rules and caveats; which rules will never be obſerved, but the evill will ſoone bee done: as in point of ſcandalous games and paſtimes: a meere fetch to maintaine either pride in our owne abilities, (as if wee ſaw more then common folke) or to eſtabliſh carnall liberty: Is not this to chuſe to be nought with much adoe, rather then to ſit ſtill and bee honeſt? Goodneſſe rather deſires to bee innocent with jealouſie, then guilty with diſtinctions. And thus I might bee endleſſe. I conclude, what ever reaſon is carnall, and what ever proceeds thence, word or deed, is earthly, ſenſuall and diveliſh. And ſo much for anſwer to the firſt queſtion.

2Kings

8. Politicke blanching.

The ſecond queſtion ariſing hence is this, whether any policy and wiſdome may be uſed by Chriſtians, though perhaps there may be ſome appearance of humane mixture in it? Whereto I anſwer, that in ſome caſes it is lawfull for a Chriſtian to uſe ſuch policy, although perhaps to ſome ſimple minded ones it may be thought ſubtilty: for the matter reſts not in the judgement of men (who are ready to cenſure whatſoever they cannot comprehend) but what the word alloweth. For hee is allowed not whom man, but God himſelfe approveth. And it is an error in many weake ones, that under pretence of ſimplicity of converſation (which God expreſſely requireth of us, 1 Cor.1.12.) they cry out of all policy, as circumvention and ſubtilty. True it is, this wicked world is full of ſhifts and ſubtilties, and ſometimes Gods people themſelves are too much given to breake their bounds (as I have already ſhewed) but yet, we muſt neither condemne the righteous, nor juſtifie the wicked. The Scripture it ſelfe affords us examples and proofes of the lawfulneſſe hereof: Matth.10.16. our Saviour tells his Diſciples, he ſent them forth as ſheep in the midſt of wolves; and therefore wills them to be wiſe as Serpents, and innocent as Doves; ſo farre as ſimplicity and pureneſſe will admit, policy is not onely lawfull, but alſo neceſſary, both for the honour of the truth, and the ſafeguard of the godly, their names, eſtates and perſons, as alſo for the countermining and oppoſing of Satans wiles and policies, and the malicious plots of his inſtruments: And the Lord himſelfe doth juſtifie it. For, not onely in extraordinary caſes, as the borrowing of the Egyptians jewells and gold, that they might robbe them by their ſudden departure: But alſo in an ordinary way he allowes policy: For he taught *Ioſhua* policy, Chap. 8. to uſe a ſtratageme and circumvent the men of Ai, by diſſembling a flight: and *David*, 2 Sam.5. 23. bidding him to go againſt the Philiſtins by a way unlooked for. And ſundry patternes we have in Scripture of the practice hereof with commendation. The reſpects therefore wherein it is lawfull muſt rather be underſtood by us, then the thing in generall condemned: and they are theſe.

2. *Queſt.* What policy may be uſed?

Rom.3.end.

God himſelfe juſtifies policy.

First, when it repugneth not to a word of God, manifeſt or by juſt conſequence deducted. For whatſoever is againſt the word cannot bee well done, with all the colouring in the world. As for a man in any caſe to ſpeake a direct untruth, or deny a flat truth, cannot but repugne to the word: But in ſome caſes to conceale a truth, or forbeare the deniall of an untruth,

Upon what tearmes it is lawfull.

1.

Eſay 8.

2 Kings

untruth, agrees well with the word. Secondly, when policy trencheth upon charity, and is againſt mercy, compaſſion, love, good report, juſtice and honeſty. As *Paul* ſaith, Finally brethren, whatſoever is juſt, good, of good report,, that enſue, and the God of peace be with you. Thirdly, when it is againſt the glory of God, and the honour of his name, as of our profeſſion and the Goſpel. Doe all, ſaith *Paul*, Col. 3. to the glory of God the Father. In this reſpect (as I take it) ſome of the chiefe Martyrs imitated them, Heb. 11. 38. who refuſed to be delivered when they might: not ſimply unwilling to be ſafe: but leſt their eſcape might poſſibly be an occaſion of inſulting to the enemy, and an imputation to their cauſe, and a reproach to them for deſerting the truth, whereas perhaps ſetting this regard aſide, ſome private perſons might have fled to one City, being perſecuted in another. For nature it ſelfe ſeekes her owne ſafety; and it is a ſinne to bring needleſſe trouble upon our ſelves.

Phil. 4. 3.

4. Fourthly, when the uſing of ſuch policy, ſtands not with the peace of a mans private ſpirit and conſcience, although perhaps it be erroneous in that particular. The reaſon is, becauſe whatſoever is not of faith is ſinne; not onely againſt knowledge, but without knowledge. For as in the former reſpect it is moſt horrible to goe againſt the light, though the world ſhould judge it never ſo glorious and goodly, as Rom. 3. 8. although good ſhould come of it: ſo when the thing is either done againſt light, or doubtfully, (though in it ſelfe the policy may be lawfull, yet) to the doer it is unlawfull and a ſnare; as we ſee in the caſes of ſome weake Chriſtians, that becauſe they did but doubtingly caſt a little frankincenſe into the Idolls fire, (without any purpoſe of worſhip) for the ſafeguard of their lives, although at the preſent they ſaw not ſo much evill in it, yet afterward, ſeeing the diſhonour to God accruing thereby, they were ſo wounded, that they were never well, till they had reverſed their act, and loſt their lives. Still I ſay as before, that we may in ſome caſes of extremity, pitty humane feare or frailty, but that makes nothing for the allowance of that policy.

Rom. 14.

Queſt. 3. In what caſes is this policy lawfull. 1. Caſe.

Thirdly and laſtly, here it may be asked in what ſpeciall caſes it is lawfull for men to uſe theſe warranted policies? I anſwer, it is not eaſie to make an induction of all particulars; yet to ſatisfie the minde of the hearer, I will mention ſome. Firſt aloofeneſſe and carrying of things afarre off, and concealing of a truth, or our ſelves, whether in word guiſe, and ſemblance, act or practice, for good ends, either of obtaining ſome good, or avoiding ſome evill, inevitably like to enſue, upon diſcovery of ſuch a truth; cannot be unlawfull, ſo there be no direct denying truth, or affirming falſhood: For the matter is not in this, what error another is neceſſarily brought into, but whether I lead him ſinfully into it. Thus *Rahab* in concealing the ſpies by all her skill and policy had not done amiſſe, if ſhe had not uſed an indirect meane alſo to ſave them, to wit a flat lye: (which yet the Lord did mercifully pardon to her) and ſo I ſay of the other examples before mentioned. But commonly (through the bordering of theſe two ſo neerly) we are very prone to mix the one with the other. *Huſhai* did well to conceale from *Abſalon* the weakneſſe of *David*, yet it was hard for him to keep his bounds, & to affirm that of him (for ſtrength and courage) which as the caſe then ſtood,

Joſh. 2. 4.

2 Sam. 17. 8.

was

was out of *Davids* power to performe, if he had beene ſuddenly ſurpriſed with ſuch an army: yet the Lord was in the counſell (not allowing any untruth, but) ordering it to his purpoſe of ſafe conducting *David*. So to carry our ſelves aloofe from the ungodly by any art of concealement, to defeat their malice and intents, ſo we flatter them not, or wrong the truth, is lawfull. For defence of an honeſt man, it is lawfull to preſent what we know by him, which might blemiſh the accuſation caſt upon him, but to make a lye in his defence is unlawfull. Speciall is that of *Zedechia*, conſented unto as lawfull by *Ieremy* himſelfe, where the King (to prevent the ſuſpition of the Nobles, that the Prophet and he ſhould talke of ſurrendring the City) inſtructs him to anſwer them by a concealement of truth, yet with truth. Tell them (ſaith he) that thou beſoughteſt me that thou mighteſt no more be caſt into the dungeon; and that was true in it ſelfe; but neither all the truth, nor that which concurred with their thoughts: But yet their error was no ſinne in *Ieremy*. It is a ſure rule diſſimulation by negative concealement is lawfull, but no ſimulation. Jer. 38. 26.

A ſecond inſtance: It is lawfull for good ends to uſe this policy, *viz.* To offer the object of a thing indifferent (that is ſuch a thing as may either be offered or not offered without ſin) to a bad perſon, who yet is like to accept & make uſe of the thing ſo offered ſinfully: For example, for the freeing of an innocent, my ſelfe or another, from an unjuſt calumny or exception, it is lawfull to aſcribe to a carnall man his uttermoſt due praiſe (ſo I neither lye nor flatter) though perhaps elſe, I ſhould not be forward in praiſing him, conſidering what baſe evills he is fraught with. *Paul* uſed this policy in praiſing *Agrippa* (a Jew who beleeved *Moſes* and the Prophets) for that particular, and that he was a meet judge in the cauſe; and (for the preſent) taxed him not for his incontinency with *Berenice* (wherein he profeſſedly lived) although perhaps this, by *Agrippa's* ſinne, might poſſibly harden him in his courſe: yet becauſe it had no direct ill on *Pauls* part, and made for a good end, it was lawfull. 2. Caſe. Act. 26. 8.

A third inſtance may be this: It is a lawfull policy to uſe the unavoidable malice or evill in any man to a good end, either mine owne benefit or the good of others, and ſo the indemnity of both: If I would purſue a bad perſon, whom I know (though in other private reſpects whether juſtly or unjuſtly) to be in the diſpleaſure and deepe ill will of a Magiſtrate, yet it is lawfull for me to borrow aide of that enmity and grudge of his, for the puniſhment of the offender: Although (were it not in ſuch a caſe) I ought neither to concurre with his diſpleaſure, to aggravate it, or to occaſion his ſinne to rankle in his boſome. An example whereof we have in *Paul*, Acts 23. 6. who ſeeing the two ſtrong factions of Sadducees and Phariſees bent againſt him to overthrow him, uſed policy to ſet them together by the eares. I (ſaith he) am a Phariſee, and the ſonne of one, and am accuſed this day of the reſurrection of the dead: All this was true, although more was true alſo: But he foreſaw that this ſpeech would ſet a quarrell betweene them, and ſo it did, and thereby himſelfe eſcaped the dint of their fury, and drew the more potent ſide againſt the other from himſelfe. Some might thinke it a ſhift and a ſubtilty not caring what became of others, ſo he might eſcape: But he did lawfully 3. Caſe.

2 Kings

uſe the unavoidable ſinne in which they both lived, to wit faction and diſcord, (although ſimply it was not a ſinne to hate an hereticke) and which it was not in his power to hinder, for his owne ſafety; he onely ſought (I ſay) to diſunite them juſtly (who were now unjuſtly combined in a bad cauſe) that himſelfe might eſcape.

4. Caſe. Fourthly, it is a lawfull courſe to uſe this policy, to take the bow which a bad man ſhootes in, to outſhoot him, and ſo to put him to ſilence. For why? Herein is no actuall, but an appearing and ſemblable concurrence onely with him in his evill by a ſuppoſition. Thus to confute a Papiſt out of his owne tenets, (though they be nought) as to cut his throate with his owne knife, is not unlawfull. The Papiſts exceedingly vilifies the word written, and the cleaving thereto, and ſaith, it is a noſe of wax, and may be turned any way: But tradition (he ſaith) is ſureſt, and the voice of the Pope determining is certaine: To avoide this error, we urge them with their argument for the reall preſence grounded upon thoſe words (This is my body.) When we anſwer, that although it be the text, yet not the meaning; they inſiſt thus, It is the word of the Text; Is it not the very word? We doe not allow it in their ſenſe: but yet we ſo farre take the generall as granted, that we ſay the reaſon is ſtrong againſt themſelves: for if it be ſo eſſentiall to cleave to the word in one queſtion, why not in all? Thus *Paul*, although he doe not teach us to borrow prooſes of men to juſtifie Gods truth, which needs them not, yet) to convince the Heathen who acknowledged no other truth, doth alledge their owne writers againſt them, both the Athenians, Acts 17. and the Cretians, Tit. 1. So our Saviour himſelfe, Matth. 12. 27. askes the Scribes, If I by Beelzebub caſt out Divells, by whom do your children caſt them out? Many of their children tooke upon them without warrant, but if they held their call and warrant good, why ſhould they ſo ſlanderouſly accuſe our Saviour for his caſting out, whoſe call (they knew) was more unqueſtionably good? He equalls not their warrant to his, but by a confeſſed thing, he convinces them of that they would not acknowledge.

5. Caſe. Fifthly, it is lawfull in policy to make ſhew of that I meane not, ſo I doe it to a good end, and there be no ſinne in it. As *ex. gr.* I intend not to puniſh an offender in ſuch a courſe of proceeding as I uſe againſt him; yea perhaps, although I would, yet I cannot, nay more, perhaps it were not lawfull: yet for the attaining of a more excellent end, I may make ſemblance of it, threaten him with it, and cauſe it to appeare unto his ſenſe, that I may and will urge it; and all to breake his heart to bring the truth to light, and to turne him from his evill, which elſe (of himſelfe) he would in no wiſe abandon. Somewhat like to this policy, was that fact of *Salomon*, 1 King. 3. to the two harlots: When the queſtion was whoſe the live-child was, (both of them ſtiffely maintaining to be hers) God put this wiſdome into him to call for a ſword, and make them beleeve, he would cleave the child in two: A thing not onely terrible and wrongfull to the true mother, but alſo cruell and unjuſt: But by this meanes he came to diſcover the affections of the naturall mother. But the common courſe of men is, to make ſemblance of ſome puniſhments which (although they are both lawfull and neceſſary, yet) out of baſe

pitty

pitty or cowardiſe, they neither doe nor meane to execute, and ſo harden others in their ſinne. This is ungodly.

6. Caſe. Sixtly, It is a lawfull policy for us to reſtraine our ſelves in the meaſure of ſome holy endeavours, ſo oft as we foreſee that our ſtanding out to the uttermoſt were like to endanger us wholly, and alſo ſtoppe the courſe of our endeavours in generall. Thus wee ſee *Paul* preaching at Epheſus two or three whole yeares, contented himſelfe in generall to diſcharge his conſcience, and to inveigh againſt Idolatry; although in ſpeciall he abſtained from oppoſing of *Diana*, & the Idolatry committed with her; becauſe, either as yet he ſaw not the people ſufficiently catechiſed in that point, or becauſe he ſaw the ſtreame of the City wholly and irreſiſtably to goe that way; and therefore he choſe rather a little to correſpond with the neceſſity of the time, then violently to oppoſe it with the overthrow of his Miniſtery. But this muſt not warrant us therefore actually to doe any thing in maintaining the ſtreame of ſuch evills, when we may avoid it. For a negative omiſſion of a thing unſeaſonable and bootleſſe for us to attempt, is not as a poſitive doing of that which might ſnare our conſcience, and ſtrengthen that which is too ſtrong already. As for example, perhaps in times of perſecution, to forbeare an open inveighing againſt the Maſſe, whereupon both the ruine of our owne perſons ſhould enſue, and no hurt at all done to the Idoll, (except we could prove our ſelves called to it) were moſt frivolous: And yet we ought elſe to give no negative allowance to evill: But becauſe we cannot in wiſdome truſt God for protection in oppoſing of the ſtreame when danger is unavoidable, therefore we are not called to it: To ſerve evill times is policy; to ſerve the evill of them is treachery. Act. 18.

7. Caſe. Seventhly, It is good policy to keepe our ſelves within the compaſſe of our owne places; and not to ruſh our ſelves under colour of zeale beyond our bounds. As for example, It is not meet that monuments of Idolatry be retained in any Church, as Popiſh Images and other ſuperſtitious markes; and if they be within our owne power and authority, we ought our ſelves to deface them and aboliſh them, as we ſee, Deut. 7. 25. But to ruſh out of our owne places and callings without publique authority or ſufficient warrant and ſafety, to attempt the defacing of them in an open manner, where our priuateneſſe cannot extend, were fooliſh, and a raſh caſting of our ſelves upon danger not eaſily remedied. In ſuch a caſe, the Lord holds us excuſed, when we doe that which lyes in our private power to doe by mourning, prayer, and abſtaining from the leaſt concurrence of evill, though we proceed no further: If we prevaile not, then to reſt patient, bearing that which we cannot reforme. In both theſe two latter reſpects, to be over juſt, and over buſie, is not lawfull, as *Salomon* ſaith, Eccleſ. 7. 15. 16. Deut. 7. 25. 26.

8. Caſe. Laſtly, It is lawfull for the avoiding of a ſlander and imputation caſt upon us, and the purchaſing of ſafeguard and credit to our perſons, (eſpecially if publicke) to doe that which otherwiſe we would not, and wherein there is ſome inconvenience, ſo there bee no direct evill in it. Thus *Paul*, Acts 21. 24. was perſwaded (though ſome blame both him and them that ſet him on worke) and that ſafely to purifie himſelfe, and take upon him a vow, as being a ceremony impoſed by God, and then alſo

2 Kings

alſo ſuch an one as had leaſt evill in it, to ſtop the ſlander of thoſe Jewes which accuſed him for an oppoſer of the law of *Moſes*: That ſlander diſabled and endangered his perſon among the Jewes: The ceremony therefore having not wholly breathed out her laſt, at leaſt among the Jewes, he was content to yeeld unto. And the like I may ſay of his circumciſing of *Titus*, a thing which he was otherwiſe loath to doe, ſave in the former reſpects, for he knew it might be ſome occaſion on the other ſide to provoke thoſe Gentiles among whom he had preached the overthrow of *Moſes* his law. And the like may be ſaid of the edict which the Apoſtles made, and ſent by *Paul* and *Barnabas* among the Gentiles, who ſtill were peſtred with the oppoſition of Jewes, reſiſting their Miniſtery; no doubt had it not beene ſuch a thing as they ſaw very materiall for the preſent ſtopping of controverſie, and alſo that the things they enjoined had as well an naturall evill and baſeneſſe in them, as a ceremoniall, as to eate ſtrangled and bloud, or a meere unlawfulneſſe as to eate meates polluted by Idolls, knowing them to be ſo, or to commit fornication, which the heathens thought to be a thing as arbitrary as eating and drinking: They would never have once forced any ceremony upon the Gentiles: But the light had not as yet diſcovered the abrogation of ceremonies to all ſorts: And therefore for ſo weighty reſpects, they permitted that for the preſent, which afterward no doubt, they would have abhorred. The Jewes no doubt did hereby thinke him to concurre with them in the eſteem of ceremonies; but their error was nothing to him, whoſe end was to confute ſlander, for whenas he came among ſuch as oppoſed the doctrine of Chriſt, by urging the neceſſity of ceremonies he was as ſtrongly againſt them, as he was yeelding in the other, where no ſuch danger was: For, neither was he ſo hot againſt the Jewiſh ceremonies, when they were uſed for conſcience by the weake and ignorant, and not with oppoſition to Chriſt in the point of ſalvation. Nay rather then, he was all in all to all, that he might win ſome, and gave way wiſely to things not confeſſedly abrogated for a better end.

Act.15.

And to theſe inſtances many more might be added, but I ſee the time (beloved) is more then paſt. The concluſion of all is, let us abhorre all falſhood and ſubtilty, let us try and examine the colours of good and evill, let us keepe that which is ſound, and abhorre that which is contrary, ſuſpecting alway our baſe nature, which ſeekes her uttermoſt liberty, and through ſelfe-love eaſily beleeves that to bee warrantable which it deſires. And ſo joyning an equall caution, the ſimplicity of Doves with the wiſdome of Serpents, & wholly reſigning up our ſelves to be guided by God, and not ſeeking our ſelves, the Lord will mercifully bring us out of both ſides of extremities, Eccleſ.7.18.19. Which that he would doe, let us begge heartily of him, as all other graces in the name of his Sonne: To whom with the Father and the holy Ghoſt, be all glory and praiſe both now and for ever. And ſo I finiſh this doctrine alſo of carnall reaſon, the firſt of thoſe points which I propounded to ſpeake of out of this twelfth verſe; purpoſing to proceed in the next Lecture with thoſe that remaine.

THE

THE NINTH LECTVRE
ſtill continued upon this twelfth VERSE.

VERSE XII.

VERSE 12. *Are not Abana and Pharfar, rivers of Damaſcus, better then all the waters of Iſrael? May I not waſh in them and be cleane? So he went away in a rage.*

VERSE 13. *Then his ſervants came neere, unto him, and ſaid, Father, if the Prophet had ſayd, &c.*

2 Kings

I Have already (beloved in our Lord Jeſus) diſpatcht thoſe two former points which I gathered out of this twelfth verſe, both ariſing from the cavill of this poore leper *Naaman*, at the unexpected way of the Prophet to effect his cure. The former point was, How full and fertile a baſe heart of unbeleefe is of cavills and exceptions againſt the cleare truth of God. The latter was, carnall reaſon is a great caviller and enemy againſt the word and promiſe. I dwell no more upon either. It is time now for us to haſten forward to the ſecond generall head contained in this verſe: And that in a word is *Naamans* diſtemper upon, both the defeat of his erroneous conceit, and the hereſay of a new (ſenſeleſſe to his reaſon) and unlooked for direction. In this ſecond generall, (through providence) we will inſiſt in this order: Firſt, enquiring into the roote of this diſtemper of his and diſcontentedneſſe: Secondly, handling the diſtemper it ſelfe. To leave the latter to his place, and come to the former: The roote of his diſtemper, was a maine error or miſtake of the Prophets meſſage, and a falſe opinion of his owne way of curing: If this had not beene, all his pudder had beene ſpared: If he had but admitted one true principle before hand, that God muſt be left to his owne way and courſe of working a miraculous cure, and it is not a meete thing that man ſhould be both chapman and cuſtomer, to pitch his owne price upon

The Second generall head of this verſe. *Naamans* diſtemper.

4 Kings

upon Gods commodity or binde God to his owne invention, but leave him to worke freely as him pleaſeth, being glad that he will worke any way for the releeſe of a poore diſtreſſed creature: I ſay, had *Naaman* but ſtooped ſo low as to ſuffer free mercy to utter it ſelfe freely and beene thankefull for it too; all this diſtemper of his, (which doubtleſſe expreſſed it ſelfe in more paſſages then the text mentions) might have all beene prevented: Then his cavilling with the meſſage as fooliſh; then his diſcontented receiving it with wrath, then his proud and coy heart, that could no longer forbeare to waite at the doore, then his ſcorning of the Prophet (as being of a great friend become an enemy) then his flinging away in a mad humour and deſperate rage, (not caring to return home as he came and loſe his labour) then his fiery indignation and railing upon all the occaſions of his defeate: all and every of them had beene foreſtalled, and he brought on to the cure with eaſe and content. But now we ſee how this one error cauſeth a world of ſorrow, not eaſily redreſſed, except the ſame mercy which this ſilly orphan cavills at ſo much, had even pittied him in his kicking againſt it, and had incloſed him in her armes, and not ſuffered him to be miſerable, who would not be happy. But of that after.

Doctrine. Admit but one error in Gods matters, and infinite follow.

This being our bottome to ground upon; let the point (brethren) be this, That the yeelding to one erroneous principle in the weighty matter of grace & ſalvation, or in any matter of Religion, cauſeth a great deal of danger and diſtemper to follow thereupon: It is as a breach in the ſea, which at firſt, a little coſt if foreſeene, might have ſtopped, but after is hardly recovered. As S. *Iames* ſpeaks of the tongue, ſo here, Behold how great a fire a little ſparkle kindleth. I will prove the point firſt God willing, by Scripture, reaſon and experience, and then (which is my maine aime) will apply it. And for the firſt, take theſe texts, Pſal. 73. *David* had forgot his rule, That the wicked though they proſper never ſo much, yea though they live an hundred years, yet it ſhall goe never the worſe with the righteous: For a ſinner of an hundred yeare old is accurſed: And there is no diſcovery, either of love or hatred certainly by outward adminiſtration. Now what comes of it? Oh! ſaith he, my feete had well neare ſlipt, (nay he had ſlipt indeed and fallen too) I had almoſt condemned the generation of the righteous; hee beganne to bleſſe the wicked, and to wiſh their portion; to be weary of his choice, his hopes, and that he was anointed King. And why? Becauſe the wicked floriſhed as the greene bay-tree, their paths were anointed with butter, and all proſpered with them? Such a foole, ſo diſguiſed, yea a beaſt in Gods ſight, he became by one error committed in the admittance of a falſe ground; which when once removed, the eclipſe ceaſed, the coaſt waxed cleare againe, and he recovered his former hold againe, as the end of that Pſalme witneſſeth. See againe, Pſal. 43. wherein the abſence of one principle cauſed *David* to grow into deadly dumps; and that was this, His troubles were ſo long that he beganne to thinke God might repent him of that free grace wherewith he had once imbraced him: This cauſed exceeding diſtemper in his ſpirit, ſo that hee thought himſelfe caſt off: So *Hezechia* in his ſickeneſſe, Eſay 38. So *Ionah* in the whales belly: And ſo the Church in captivity, Lam. 3.

Jam. 3.

Proofes of the point.

Eccleſ. 8. 12.

thought

thought herſelfe forſaken, and that God had forgotten to be merciſull. Hence the heart grew hardened, the peace of it declined to feare and horror, then the word and promiſes grew unwelcome, then the ordinances grew unſavoury, then the practice growes ſecure and looſe, and ſo all goes to havocke; which might all have beene prevented if the ſoule had kept herſelfe to the rule, That whom the the Lord loveth, to the end he loveth them. Joh. 14.1.

Read moreover, Lam. 1.8.9. where *Ieremy* deſcribes the woſull downfall & ſorrow that Jeruſalem was fallen into, and how ſhe was come down wonderfully by ſteps to the loweſt abaſement: And why? Sure the ſad error lay in the foundation, ſhe thought God would keep covenant with her, though ſhe brake with him; ſhe thought that to lye cloſe to God, and keepe covenant was no ſuch great matter, but that ſhe might trie concluſions, and ſo by a little deceitfulneſſe of ſinne the heart grew defiled, the conſcience crazy, the ſpirit hardened by cuſtome, the ſoule impenitent and ſecure, grew to care for no threats, to reject commands, to diſtruſt promiſes; and ſo came Jeruſalem down wonderfully: All which had beene prevented if either ſhe had kept cloſe to the covenant, or repented betimes upon her revolt. Beſides, look upon Heb. 3.12. Take heed leſt there be in any of you an evill heart of unbeliefe to depart away from the living God, and ſo wax hardened by the deceitfulneſſe of ſin. How doe many who beginne zealouſly, yet wax weary of weldoing by an evill heart? Upon that how doth Satan encreaſe deluſion, and tickle with his temptations? How doth the error of the wicked added thereto, draw away more by example? Then perhaps God is patient and ſmites not, ſo that the ſinner thinkes him like herſelfe; then looſeneſſe growes, then a conceit that former practice hath been too preciſe, leſſe will ſerve: Then groweth a mean eſteeme of the word eſpecially, if powerfull and comming cloſe: Then perhaps ſin having kindled thus far, makes the life of faith unſavoury, the baites of ſin ſweet, makes us thinke it eaſie to repent at our pleaſure, and ſo we grow ſome to embrace one lewd pranke ſome another, ſome to take their eaſe, neglect prayer, good company, nible at the Divells baites, pleaſure, company, gaming, petty oathes, dalliance with women, baſe faſhions, to concurre with the world, and at laſt to waſte the conſcience (with *Sampſon* and *David*) ſo farre, that a man is ſnared and growne to a falling ſickneſſe: and cannot recover himſelfe: All which might have beene prevented, by holding the rule, keep well while thou art well: Be not weary of weldoing, and the like. It were endleſſe to dwell any longer upon proofes. Pſal. 50.18.

Reaſons are many. First, becauſe Religion is a condition of life, much more warily to be tended and watched unto, then any other buſineſſe whatſoever. Now yet in all other affaires, thus we finde it. yeeld but one abſurdity, infinite many will follow upon it unavoidablely: Take it in the buſineſſe of war; If one miſtake fall out, how many ſad inconveniences follow? Let a beſieger of a City be too ventrous, and what perill enſueth? How was *Abimelec* ſlaine by a milſtone under the wall? How was *Vria* and other worthies deſtroyed by a deſperate affront made by *Ioab*? How were the Benjamites encloſed betweene the two armies of Iſrael, the one burning their City, the other before their face? How *Reaſon* 1.

2 Kings

easie is it to fall upon privy ambushments suspecting no danger? In point of contention betweene couples in marriage, or partners in trading, or others in worldly businesse, neglect but one rule in marriage to forbeare, and give place to wrath, what a fire is kindled? Neglect but oft recknings betweene men, how endlesse and confused grow the accounts? Admit but one tetch and conceit (without due pondering the matter) and how endlesse contention followes, blowes upon words, sutes upon blowes, and the ruine of each other by sutes: So fares it in all other kindes. Let there be but an error in the digestion, and what can mend it? Nothing, the bloud must needs be bad, the concoction cannot amend it, and so all diseases attend the ill stomacke, both in the head and parts of the body: Is it so in all things, and must it not much more bee so in the chiefe affaire of all other, which is the matter of Religion? Must not one radicall error there, cause an infinite pudder in the consequences thereof? Yes verily, no remedy of it.

2. *Reason.* Secondly, by law of contraries it must needs follow. For if true peace in our course, attend the cleaving to our rule; because the whole safety of it, hangs upon the grounds and directions of truth, which minister life, support, light, and defence to the particular practise: how can it chuse, but that those who warpe from the rule, must of necessity forfeit peace, and runne upon confusion? See Gal. 6. He that walkes according to rule, peace shall be to him: For when the rule holds entire, it ministers peace to the soule in all her actions, even as a sound inside of health in the heart, liver and braine, ministers content to the body in all her operations. And contrarily, if the rule be broken, it fares with the life, as it fares with the operations of nature, when the inward parts wax diseased; a palsey braine causeth the members to flag and hang downe, an ill liver causeth the body to swell: Even so is it with a spirituall man: All the acts of Religion must issue from the soundnesse of rule and grounds, if either there be knowledge, or no sincerity, or if there both, yet some maine error creep in between the joynts secretly, lo, all the whole life is miscarried, and those errors which we see, may thanke some rooted one which we see not; because it affords continuall succour unto it.

3. *Reason.* Religion is like an harmony. Eccles. 10. 1. Lastly, Religion is an holy harmony and consent, agreeing in all her parts most sweetly. As a song sung or lesson plaid in musicke, let but one disproportion bee in the tone and voice, one string jarring in the instrument, the whole melody is marred: one dead fly marres the whole box of ointment: So is it in Religion; each part affects the other by consent; an error in one, makes a jarre in all, either there must be a sutablenesse in all, or else there is a disorder in the whole. If then a string amisse be enough to spoile musicke, what is an error in the instrument, or musitian himself, if the one be nought or the other unskilfull? But I cease reasons.

1. Instance. Matth. 16. 25. In not denying our selves. Some instances let me adde. And lest I should goe too farre from my text, the first shall be in that rule of our Saviour, which I have so much beaten upon, He that will be my Disciple, let him take up his crosse and follow me. If a man begin aright with this rule, what a sweet easie trade doth he finde Religion to be? But let a man goe to worke with a contrary

trary principle, as moſt men doe, and what a wofull pudder doe they make of it? How doe they wiſh they had never begunne at all? They bury all their labours and mony in the grave of emptineſſe and vanity: Their pride and ſelfe-love ſo overtakes them in whatſoever they goe about, that alas! they are diſcouraged: They cry out upon God with thoſe hypocrites, Eſay 58. that they have heard, faſted and worſhipped God day by day, time out of minde, but ſtill they come to nothing, they want peace and comfort: And why? Becauſe they carry that within themſelves which takes up the roome of Chriſt and mercy; they will not feele themſelves orphans and fatherleſſe, but truſt to their owne bottomes, and luſts, or vanities, or at leaſt ſuppoſed goodneſſe, they will put water into Gods well, and then with this bucket, they will draw up ſome grace: Hence it comes to paſſe, if they meet with deepe conviction out of the word that tries them to the quicke, they are faine to ſhake it off with all violence to ſave their skin whole; hee that will not have a good conceit of them, but reproves them, is counted their enemy: Nay thoſe that uſed all meanes and coſt, to get in a Miniſter into their pulpit, let him but once touch their free-hold, muſt never after looke to have him their friend: once out, and ever out. Oh wofull plague! and yet (marke it who ſo will) Beloved, there are ſome among us who live under our Miniſtry, and will not keepe one day from Church, and yet have the Miniſter of God in ſo deep a prejudice that he loves them not (for no other cauſe ſave that he touches their tender plat when hee little thinkes of it) that from ſeven yeare to ſeven, they live at ſecret oddes with him; they are ready openly to cry out of him that he is their enemy, and cannot looke too rights upon him. Alas! it is from a roote of Selfe which will not out, in that they have not caſt downe their crowne at the feet of the word, as content to be ſmitten, and to count it balme: Thus, they heare often laying heapes upon heapes, and dye of thirſt: All they doe, they aime at themſelves in it, to get themſelves ſome good opinion by their zeale, bounty, good deeds; and why? The running ſore of Selfe will not be healed, and that cauſeth all to become impure. The encreaſe of the ſpleene is not more apparently the decay of the body, then their error, the cauſe of their not profiting: and ſo by cuſtome they wax hardned in it, ſo that when they doe perceive it is paſt cure, as they ſay of ſome diſeaſes as that of the lungs, that while they are curable it is hard to diſcerne them, and when they come to be diſcerned, they are paſt cure. And to conclude, all the life of ſuch is but as the ſtopping of a water courſe, which coſts great toile, and yet the ſtreame will have her courſe when all is done. Surely he that will thus hold a lye in his right hand, ſhall to his coſt finde, that Gods rules are no idle things; and an error committed in the ground, is helpleſſe in the building.

Eſay 55.2.

Pritch againſt the Miniſter.

Judg. 15.16. 18.

Let a ſecond inſtance be in the point of marriage. The Apoſtles rule is, marry in the Lord. A rule too hot and heavy for moſt beginners. Tuſh ſay they, muſt we live ſingle, till wee finde a godly husband, or wife? Then wee may ſit long enough. Why? Doe you thinke this rule ſo ſlight and needleſſe? Yes verily, they are of *Sampſons* minde, Give me her, for ſhe pleaſeth me well: And how doe they fare? Doth it goe well with them? Surely for the moſt part, as it did with him: After

2. Inſtance. In point of marriage not wiſely forbeare each other. Judg. 14.

2 Kings

After a ſhort skeaming off a little of the ſweet of their will, the Lord ſo plagues them with the fruit of their error, and ſo vexes each veine in their heart, with the prophaneneſſe, diſloyall carriage, contentiouſneſſe, waſtefulneſſe, and other diſtempers of their companions, that ſome are ready to poiſon each other, others to run away into other Countries, never returning, others to filch and ſteale, to maintaine themſelves in their beggery, and a thouſand other ſorrowes attend their error. Duties of Gods worſhip and family are neglected, children for ever ſpoiled by lewd example, callings either forſaken, or uſed for neceſſity, communion with the godly caſt off, and in a word, there is no end of their miſery; And at laſt they cry out, Now we ſee it is to ſome purpoſe to cleave to a rule, and one error in the ground, growes to bee remedileſſe in the conſequence. Oh! that we had married in the Lord.

3. Inſtan. Proverb.

So thirdly, another rule. He that keepeth his tongue keepeth his life. This rule is thought to bee no weighty one for the moſt part, till men have tried the experience of the contrary; and then Oh! what a peece of wiſdome it is to keepe their tongue? When they ſee that the giving reine to a ſlanderous, cenſorious, and uncharitable tongue coſts them repentance at leaſure, ſets their betters againſt them, creates ſutes of law againſt them, ſhrigs their purſe, brings them to ſhame, to recant their raſh words, ſubjects them to the curteſie of their imbittered adverſaries, ſo that both they and theirs feele the ſmart of it, then they cry out too late, would they had beene wiſer! Behold how ſafe it is to ſtoppe evill in the beginning, and to rule our tongues! It never hurts us to have beene ſilent, but to have ſpoken at randon, hath undone many. I know well, that there is no remedy againſt the miſchevouſly and maliciouſly minded, let a man rule himſelfe never ſo well, the beſt uſe of his tongue may bring forth ſorrow enough; but in ſuch a caſe, a man may ſuffer with quietneſſe, and commit himſelfe to God in his innocency; in the other, he brings a needleſſe croſſe upon himſelfe. I might be endleſſe; but the Lion may be eaſily gueſſed at by his paw.

Object.

But here an objection may ariſe: Why then fall there out ſo many turnagaines in the lives of the beſt? One ſhould thinke rather it were the eaſieſt life, to trouble our ſelves about no grounds at all; but carry our courſe by gueſſe, conjecture, the cuſtomes of men, our owne will: For they that goe to worke moſt warily, and deſire to be beſt grounded, yet alas! have many feares, are very much unſettled, and have never done in the proving of them to be ſound.

Anſw.

I anſwer, They who ſtagger about their grounds, may be to ſeeke, and ſo remaine doubtfull: But yet by their ſtudious enquiry and ſerious deliberating, at laſt they come to determine: whereas the prophane, careleſſe, and Atheiſticall never are troubled at all, and therefore remaine in their wofull condition! And whereas ſome of them (as *Iob* and the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks) ſeeme to die in peace, yet that peace is accurſed: for though they force to themſelves a wilfull peace, there is none to them, they goe downe to the pit with ſuch peace, as a drunken priſoner goes to execution: But this doth not infringe the doctrine, becauſe although ſome live and dye lawleſſe and ſenſleſſe; yet the caſe of the greater ſort is otherwiſe: They ruſh without due conſideration upon their maters, and accordingly

Pſal.17.

Eſay 57.ult.

cordingly meet with ſorrow and repentance: onely the godly who fix their eies upon Gods ſtable bottomes, provide beſt for themſelves; hee that walketh ſoundly, walketh ſafely, and although through unbeleefe, weakneſſe or temptation, they are often appalled, it is to teach them to cleave better to their grounds: But ordinarily they walke by rule, and finde peace: when trouble befalls them, it comes not by their cloſing with, but by warping from their rule, and when they recover their grounds, they recover their peace. So much for anſwer to this objection.

Eſay 26.2.

Now the uſes follow. Firſt, Inſtruction to teach us the wonderfull wiſdome of the art of Godlineſſe: It is grounded upon moſt weighty and materiall bottomes. No man would ſuppoſe the Lord to be ſo infinitely wiſe as he is, till he ſet himſelfe ſeriouſly to try his concluſions. Few men thinke there is any great matter in living by faith, in ſhunning appearences of evill, in cleaving to the company of the good, in pitching the ſoule upon a truth of a promiſe, threat or command: But by that time they feele the ſad fruit of their errors, then they grow to looke backe, and behold a moſt hidden excellencie in Gods principles: when their peace is loſt, and themſelves caſt upon hideous ſorrowes, then they beginne to applaude them that goe to worke by knowledge and diſcerning of things that differ: as Scholars never grow in love with an Artiſts principles, till they have examined them, and finde out their exactneſſe; then they behold the miſery of an inartificiall and ungrounded courſe of ſtudy: So is it here: Art hath no enemies ſave idiots; no more hath Religion.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction. Religion is grounded upon moſt ſolid foundations.

Secondly, it teaches us, how great a favour of God it is to any beginner in Chriſtianity, when as the Lord prevents them with wiſdome in grounding themſelves throughly, both in point of faith and converſation: Who can expreſſe the depth and height of that mercy which hath prevented ſo much ſorrow? Let it but appeare in this one principle, That a poore ſoule (though it have but a poore meaſure of grace) yet is taught of God to deny herſelfe, and to captivate herſelfe to the truth of the word; not daring to goe on the right hand or left to the contrary: Why? This is in a ſort, the comprehenſion of all other graces, the Lord herein hath laid a ground of many, & prevented a world of miſery at once: Look back into thy life paſt, and aske who hath thus led me as a Shepherd leads his ſheepe through a wilderneſſe? Oh! the helpe of ſome one principle is as much as a mans ſoule is worth! What a mercy then is it to be led on by knowledge in all our courſe? To ſhunne all the ſnares of death: Oh! be thankefull and ſay, It is not my carnall wit Lord, it is thy lore and word which hath made me wiſe, to frame my courſe! ſo that I doe now eſteeme welfare not to ſtand in wealth, or favour of men, but in the loſſe of all theſe; yea (although perſecution and the croſſe ſhould betide me for thy truth and name, yet) ſo long as conſcience and peace abide, and I am privy to it, that thou haſt loſt no honour by me, I count my ſtate happy: Looke upon the ſnares which the proud, ambitious, covetous, flatterers, and ſervers of the time pull upon themſelves, and then judge whether it be not a favour to be kept by a principle of truth, from ſuch ſorrow and repentance! The world boaſts

2. Branch. It is a ſingular favour of God to any, when they are bottomed ſoundly.

Eſay 63.14.

of

2 Kings

of her many tricks and policies, but thy one is worth them all, and ſhall preſerve thee, when they with all their inventions, ſhall bee intercepted.

Vſe 2. Admonition. Be well grounded upon the unchangeable principles of truth.

Secondly, let it be uſe of Admonition to all that deſire to ſee good dayes and a quiet life, to ground themſelves carefully upon the principles of God, and to eſchew all falſe waies and inventions. Be earneſt with God, to remove far from thee all waies of error, and to turn thee out of all croſſe paths of deceit: Remember ſtill, one error in the ground, produces infinite many dangers in the ſequell. *Reboboam* had better have given halfe his Kingdome, then to have ſplit himſelfe ſo irrecoverably upon the rocke of his ill counſellers; What ſorrow did it worke him all his dayes? Stript him of three parts of his Subjects at once! What a miſery did one error create to *Saul*, to wit, his owne carnall wiſdome, rejecting *Samuels* charge? What one quiet day had hee thirty yeares after, in all his whole life, but perpetuall vexation, till he was faine to conſult with a witch, and to fall upon his owne ſword? Nay conſider what Gods owne deare ſervants have purchaſed to themſelves, by one error and tricke put upon them by Satan! As *Davids* luſt, what a world of ſorrow did it procure? So let it warne us to abhorre the incurring of ſuch a premunire with God, by embracing any principle of error or vanity, as being once bred in the bone, will never out of the fleſh: Beware we either of inſtilling, or of drinking in any baſe error, into any, or from any of ſpeciall note for parts, learning or authority: Let ſuch as are men of place, whoſe example if bad, would like poyſon, pierce into the bowells of ſilly ignorant ones; I ſay, let ſuch looke to themſelves, leſt after in hell they cry out of them, and ſay, woe bee to ſuch examples! had not their authority beene ſtronger with me, to draw me to formality, to ambition, to pleaſures and luſts, then the word to diſſwade, I had never come here! Beware of ſuch offences! Woe be to the world becauſe of offences! both in laying blocks, and ſtumbling at blocks! It is juſt with God that one ſhould deſtroy the other, becauſe neither cared for the truth, nor to be principled upon better bottomes; Therefore they have met with ſnares.

1 Kings.13.

1 Sam.13. & 15.

Matth.18.7.

Irreſolution in matter of Religion as dangerous as utter blindeneſſe

Beware alſo of being irreſolute upon the grounds of God, either in judgement or practiſe: Stagger not, admit not doubtings and demurres upon principles formerly confeſſed: Some by Satans injections have conſulted with fleſh, after their conviction by the truth of God, and have faln to diſpence and diſtinguiſh upon them, and (as thoſe that ſeeke interpretation of Statutes, when they feele them too ſtrict) to alay and adulterate truths, as being willing to procure credit, eaſe and ſecurity to their owne eſtates and lives: But what hath it wrought them after a ſhort time, ſave endleſſe accuſation and torment? And no doubt, many feele a ſad heart within, and keep their conſcience at a bay, from breaking out, although they make faire weather of it, & ſet the beſt ſide outward: Others for love of preferment have beene weary of truth, and have fallen from being Proteſtants, to bee Pelagians, then Papiſts, then Neuters and Atheiſts. The wofull example of *Francis Spira* ſeduced by a Popes Nuncio, to renounce his profeſſion, and of others (whom I name not) are ſtill in freſh memory. If wee will needs change, change for the better,

better, and prevent an endleſſe vexation, as *Luther*, *Vergerius*, and that worthy of eternal fame *Galeacius* did, by renouncing their falſe principles. Againe, refuſe not to amend any erroneous grounds which have broken into thy courſe; admit any information of truth; diſcover thoſe manifold offences and evills which have moleſted thy conſcience and life, while they were undiſcerned; & when God hath once diſcovered them, beware of nouriſhing them; be it never ſo great vexation to thee, to undoe thy former errors and miſtakes, yet if God reveale better grounds, and rectifie thee with better principles, feare not the worlds aſperſion and cenſures, but redeeme a perpetuall inconvenience, although by a preſent miſchiefe, (as the Proverb ſaith) pulling down a bad chimney with ſome coſt, rather then induring a perpetuall ſmoky houſe, & ſore eies. Look up for courage and grace to the Lord, and know that it is the high way to credit and peace. *Auguſtines* books of Retractings and Recantings of errors, are above all his other workes, becauſe above himſelfe; he was not forced to it, but of his owne accord choſe it, to avoid ſuch inconvenience as was elſe like to have enſued.

Be not ſtubborne and reſolute to maintaine any evill in thy courſe, but mend it.

Finally, beware of all ſpeciall errors, ſuch as threaten the perverting of thy peace: As for example, If thou finde any rooted luſt, any ſeed of looſe liberty, in the ſecret of thine heart, as the bitter roote of uncleanneſſe, love of the world, pride in thy gifts, or what ever it be; doe not let it alone, becauſe perhaps for the preſent thou canſt bite it in, and feeleſt not the ſting of it to moleſt thee: Thou perhaps doſt not directly favour it, nor nouriſh the flame of it with oile, rather thou wilt ſuſpect thy ſelfe, and ſpeak againſt ſuch evills: But yet thou conſulteſt not with the truth as it is in Jeſus, to caſt out ſuch a luſt, and to defie it (as one that would picke a quarrell with his enemy, that he might goe to law with him and undoe him,) that thou mighteſt never more heare of it; and what doth this breed in thy courſe at length? Surely as coales under the aſhes, burne out in time when all are aſleepe, and burne downe the houſe, ſo doth ſuch a luſt ſalute thee ſuddenly, when a fit object is offered unto thee, (as a ſtranger is ſaid to come to *David* when he killed his neighbours ſheep) and then thou and luſt will feaſt together, and breake out to thine unſpeakeable ſorrow: How mighteſt thou have prevented it with ſeriouſnes & ſadneſſe in time? and what ſorrow will a *Delila* dallied with, create at laſt? Say not, ſhall I caſt it out, and ſhall I renounce it, but deny thy owne ſtrength; and as in anothers caſe thou wouldeſt doe in going to the Sheriffe of the Shire, ſo goe to the Lord, and perſwade him thou meaneſt it, and he ſhall caſt it out for thee: elſe, beſhrew thy ſelf in vaine, when it is too late; a little matter would have done it at firſt. Remember what *Paul* told the Centurion and *Pilot*, Acts 27. 21. in the midſt of that confuſion and feare of ſhipwracke: Sirs, ſaith he, you ſhould have hearkened unto me at firſt, and have ſtaied and wintred at Candy; it was no ſeaſon to goe to ſea at ſuch a time of yeare, ſo ſhould you have ſaved all this loſſe and pudder: Oh! this looſing from Candy, this forſaking the harbour of Gods ſafe principles, is the cauſe of all our wreck and ſorrow: now therefore at laſt, heare *Paul*, and take counſell, and caſt out all your old tacklings, rudders and maſt of your owne principles into the ſea, be led by Gods truth, and although perhaps you

Beware of ſpeciall errors.

Ephe. 4. 21.

2 Sam. 12. 4.

2 Kings

may loſe your ſhip, ſome comfort and peace which elſe you might have kept, yet be content to pay that penance for your folly and will, and (ſo ye may eſcape ſafe to heaven with your ſoules) count it a bleſſing of no ſmall value, and beware of the like afterward.

Vſe 3. Exhortation. Lay good grounds at firſt for the well ordering of our life.

Laſtly, to conclude, be exhorted to be wiſe, in laying beforehand ſound groundcells and bottomes in your owne hearts, to guide your ſelves by, both in the life of faith, and the race of converſation. It is no eaſie thing I grant, to be well grounded; it will coſt ſome paines to deny Selfe and old errors, and to be ſet as a doore upon new hinges: But the fruit of peace will requite it abundantly; and a worke well entred, is truly ſaid to be halfe done. Thinke not much of it therefore, it will quit the coſt, and make thee a gainer. Remember the rock out of which thou wert hewen: even our grandmother *Eve*, who in her innocency, (abuſing her freedome) choſe to runne into an error which proved deadly to her poſterity; how eaſily then maieſt thou doe ſo, being compaſſed about with darkeneſſe? Againe conſider, If meere miſtake and ignorance can bring in ſuch confuſion (as a witty, though wicked heathen, tells us, that the miſtake of a glaſſe turned a man into an Aſſe) what then may a choſen, a purpoſed error bring to paſſe? In theſe reſpects, be thou choice of thy grounds, whatſoever thou canſt get by hearing, reading, catechiſing, conference, experience, ſtore it up as in a treaſure: Men ſhew this wiſdome in carnall things, how choice are men in their ſeed? How will they picke it? What mony doe they grudge to give for it? What choice ſienes will they get for their ſtocks? And what breed will they buy for the ſtocke of their cattell? But come to the principles of their Religion and converſation, and there the moſt refuſe ſtuffe, the moſt baſe opinions of the vulgar, the errors of the wicked, their own conjectures, ſelfe ſowne corne, and the ſeed which growes upon their own ſoile will ſerve, ſeeking out no further: whence it comes to paſſe, that their fruit, their corne, and their cattell proſper, but their ſoules and conſciences, their ſpirituall peace and growth in grace, comes to nought: In other matters they finde no pudder, onely in their eſtate to God-ward, their feares and diſtempers are unſpeakeable, and for the moſt part, remedileſſe: Oh! be choice then in your grounds and principles: Search the Scriptures, goe to the Law and Teſtimony, get Gods heifer to plow with, deny your ſelves, and (to conclude with this example of *Naaman*) aſcribe this honour to God, that he is meeteſt to rule in his own element, and therefore doe not foreſtall him in his owne way. Thou wouldeſt hearken to each man in his owne element, (it is a maxime of experience) as to a mariner in the judgement of the windes, to a plowman about oxen, to a ſouldier in point of battell; and ſhall every one be preferred as a Counſellor for Religion, and heaven before God and his word? Pray and uſe all meanes for the ſpirit of thy great Prophet, the Lord Jeſus, to adviſe thee how to paſſe all thy matters, eſtabliſhing all thy thoughts by his counſell, that happy ſucceſſe and bleſſing may follow thee in all thy waies, and thou maieſt be free from the miſeries of error.

Choiceneſſe of men in outward things to have good principles.

Pſal. 119.

Advices for the well ordering of our courſe.

One word of advice, and ſo an end. It may be here demanded, what principles ſhould a man get, for the managing of his courſe? To which I anſwer.

anſwer, It were needleſſe here to number, or inſtance in particulars: It muſt be the habit of wiſdome, which muſt prompt the ſoule in ſuch caſes as fall out, onely theſe three I would briefly commend to all who would cut off ſorrow from their life. The firſt concerning God himſelfe, the ſecond, touching men, the third, our ſelves, yet all tending one way: And theſe three are faith, righteouſneſſe and contentation. No three vices create ſo tedious a pudder in the courſe as diſtruſt, unrighteouſneſſe and diſcontent. For the firſt, ſee Heb. 13.5. Let not your converſation be in covetouſneſſe, for he hath ſaid, he will not faile. I doe not give this rule to the poore onely, but to the rich; not onely this * deare yeare, but alway: Oh! this one error of diſtruſt, what a flood-gate of ſorrowes doth it let in! when charge of children, debts, deare priſes, unthankfull, unmercifull world, pinches a man, then at the hardeſt to have this bond of the Lords in a corner to ſue, what a ſtay, what boot in beame is it? Oh! when a man can ſay, my bond ſhall be as good as mony at all times! I hold upon all ſufficiency, I have that I have from a fountaine alway running, which ſhall hold when the deepeſt lake ſhall drie up: But let a man want this bottome, this center to draw lines of ſupply from it, and what is a mans life but vexation, cauſing the heart to bee endleſſe in flinging about, coaſting and ſherking every where; and what then? Indirect courſes, ſnares and endleſſe unquietneſſe, defeat and diſappointment of expectation, and lying down in ſorrow! Oh! ye rich men in theſe hard times, if God bee able to ſatisfie you as well in ſpending as ſparing, and provide you reſt in the middeſt of other mens carking, who thinke when all is done, they ſhall dye beggars, what ſhall ye loſe by releeving the poore and ſtarven ones?

1. Faith in God.

* Preached in the yeares 1630. 1631.

Secondly, righteouſneſſe is a breſtplate, armor of proofe, to keep out darts and ſtinging vexation. See Ephe. 6.14. As faith fences the inward man, ſo doth this the outward: Oh! goe out, walke abroad in the world with this corſlet, and it ſhall repell all reproach and odious diſdaine of men! It will make a man ſhotfree, (as *Charles* the fifth ruſhing into the battell ſaid, a true Emperor was never ſhot with a bullet) it will harnis thee againſt all feare, what any man can caſt in thy teeth: whatſoever courſes others take, raking and ſcraping tooth and naile, by hook or crook; yet thou goeſt on quietly, ſerveſt providence, makeſt no more haſte then good ſpeed; and hereby perhaps thou thriveſt faſter then great ſticklers with all their irons in the fire: But ſay thou ſhouldeſt not, yet thou canſt ſay that, which they cannot (with *Samuel* and *Paul*) whoſe oxe have I taken, whoſe ſilver have I coveted, whoſe bloud have I ſucked, whoſe face have I ground? Oh brethren! This deare yeare I doubt, may call the ſinnes of many oppreſſors to remembrance! The poore ſhall curſe thee, Oh thou regrater, thou engroſſer of corne, and raiſer of priſes from ſeven to tenne ſhillings, or a marke in the buſhell! And ſhall not the Lord heare them? Will not the example of that corne cormorant who hanged himſelfe the other day, ſting you! will it not cauſe all thy falſe weights, cut meaſures, cheats, tricks and cunning to vex thee! then is the more behinde, and one day, this error of thine will gugge thee to the quicke, and cauſe thee to cry out, away with this mammon of deceit, I am choked with it!

2. Righteouſneſſe to man.

1 Sam. 12.3. Acts 20.33.

A ſad example.

2 Kings

3. Contentation in our ſelves.

Thirdly, contentation is a ſweet ground to ſettle upon: Phil.4.6. Let your moderate minde be knowne to all men, the Lord is at hand: Bee content with your preſent ſtate, as Heb.13.5. Oh! what a world of ſorrow doe they incurre, who beginne their courſe with unſettled diſcontent! Oh! the preſent, is of all other moſt unpleaſing: They are going up the craggy hill, looking at laſt to get to the toppe, and there to finde a Paradiſe; but they meet with a Purgatory: A quiet minde ſitting at the bottome of the hill, is much better, beſide the trouble: Get the ground of your content within, for without you cannot; it is ſafer to bring your mind to cloſe with your meanes, then make a coate for the Moone, that is, to draw them to an equipage with it, for it is endleſſe: Oh! mens hopes and hurries are their life! And what comes of it, pudder and vexation? The roote of the error is never amended in the progreſſe, but growes worſe as a ſore that rankles: Houſe muſt be joyned to houſe, land to land, farme to farme, trade to trade, riches will not come in faſt enough: Alas! to trade with a mans owne ſtocke is ſimple, men muſt occupy with three parts of other mens ſtocks to a fourth of their owne: They gape at their commings in, but at their charges, houſekeeping, ſervants, toile of body and ſpirit, ill debtors, uſurious payments, they looke not: They looke to cleare all, and prove rich men: But in the meane time, their principle being bad, corrupts their whole courſe, and blaſts their hopes, For hee that loveth ſilver ſhall not bee ſatisfied therewith: And ſo at laſt they get moonſhine in water for their requitall; and is it not juſt, that ſuch ſhould meet with many ſnares, and pierce themſelves through with many darts, who will needs have it ſo? They ſhould have kept the ſafe harbour of Candy, and haſted no further, and ſo they might have ſaved all this loſſe; either all or nothing, proves nothing indeed at laſt: Oh! your ſtrength had beene to ſit ſtill, not idly, but contentedly, and ſo if your gaine had beene little, your loſſe had yet beene but ſmall. Godlineſſe is a great proviſion with contentment. I know not how I am ſlid into theſe diſcourſes, theſe hard times cauſe it, but they will helpe you alway. So much for this doctrine.

Eſay 30.

1 Tim.6.6.

Now having ended the roote of his diſtemper, we come to the diſtemper it ſelfe, which although in part, beloved, offered it ſelfe unto us, in the former verſe; yet we have reſerved the handling thereof wholy to this place, becauſe the end of this verſe is fuller for it then the former. There it is ſaid, that *Naaman*, (at the hearing of the meſſage) was wroth, & moreover, that he takes upon him to ſet his own thoughts againſt the Prophets, in a queazy and coy pride of his own worth, as if ſuch an one as he were highly wronged, and the Prophet deeply forgate himſelf to handle one ſo ſcornefully, who at home was a Prince, & a great mans favourite; and here in this verſe, he is ſo farre from being aſhamed, that rather hee is worſt at laſt, then at firſt; for now his tetch is turned to a rage, hee went away, ſaith the text, in a rage: All the matter amounteth to theſe two points: The former, his coyneſſe and pride of heart: The latter, his breaking out into wrath and rage both in ſpeech and carriage. Let us beginne with the former, in which I will be briefe, that ſo I may come to the latter.

Touching his pride therefore, he that compares his carriage in the ninth

ninth verſe, with this in the eleventh and twelfth, might juſtly wonder at the ſuddaine change of *Naaman*? For there he crouched like a Lazer and beggar, and ſtood at the gate, as one glad to dance attendance: But now hearing the anſwer to jarre with his owne way, he is as much in the other extreame, and now he turnes mad, frets and rages at the Prophet, thinking him ſo diſdainfull, that a King would uſe him more curteouſly then he. But lo, in this taxing of the Prophet, and falling out with him, there is much more pride found in his owne boſome, and that really, whereas poore *Eliſha* was ſtill as humble as before, ſetting aſide *Naamans* conceit. The point then is this, Selfe if it be put to it, is moſt coy and proud; although being quiet, ſhee ſeeme very low and humble: And hereof there be many reaſons.

2 Kings

First part of his diſtemper. Pride and coyneſſe.

Doctrine. Selfe is proud and coy, if defeated.

1. *Reaſon.* Tit. 1. 15.

Firſt, becauſe the heart ſtill abides uncleane, where Selfe is chiefe, whatſoever the ſhewes are which ſhe makes, or graces ſhee reſembles. Now to the impure all things are defiled, even the conſcience it ſelfe: much more then ſhew of crouching humility, may breake out into pride and bluſtering. There is a generation which ſeemes pure in her owne eies, (as ſelfe-deceiving hypocrites) but they are not waſhed from their uncleanneſſe. They are like thoſe Idolls, Deut. 7. whoſe corruption is ſtill in them, till they be quite defaced; no waſhing with doctrine, with meanes upon meanes, no melting, no turkeiſing could do them good till they be defaced. As the houſe of fretted leproſie was paſt ſcraping, it was to be demoliſhed. Theſe types ſerved to ſhew that Selfe of it ſelfe is incorrigible. And the truth is, the Lord would have us know, that only faith is able to purifie the heart.

2. *Reaſon.*

Secondly, till conviction come, ſinne lurkes as a ſnake in her hole. A man would thinke ſhe were dead: But try her and bring her to the fire, and ſhe troubles the whole houſe. Who were ſo quiet in their Kingdome as thoſe Phariſees, ere *Iohn Baptiſt* and the Lord Jeſus came? How did they crouch? But no ſooner came the one with his thundering voice, Oh ye generation of vipers, how ſhall ye eſcape the wrath to come? And the other, Woe be to you Scribes and Phariſees Hypocrites! But then they beganne to bluſter and ſhew themſelves in their colours; which would not have beene, if their outward painted crouching had beene laid in the oile of humbleneſſe indeed. It is true of this ſpawne of ſinne, which *Paul*, Rom. 7. ſaith of the whole corruption of nature, That ſinne without the Law is unknowne: But when the Law came ſin revived. When once the power of the humbling Law of God came upon the ſoule, ſoked and confederated with ſinne, as her partner and inmate; then beganne the union betweene the ſoule and corruption to breake, and then beganne ſinne to bluſter and be proud and mad: So is it here. When Selfe is croſſed, and her owne way rejected, ſhe is as proud and mad as *Achitophel* that went away and diſdained and hung himſelfe, becauſe that he was not preferred by *Abſalon*, befor *Huſhai*. 2 Sam. 17. 23. While Selfe may runne in her owne ſtreame, feele her owne heate, and finde as ſhee looked for, that her devotion, duties and gifts are accepted, and that ſhe can fetch water of comfort, from her owne well, ſhe is well appaid, applauds herſelfe, and thinkes ſhe hath ſcrued herſelfe into the grace of God, with finer eaſe and ſlight, then a ſound and honeſt heart

2 Kings

could doe; But when her mufflers once be pluckt from her face by the Lord, and ſhe is croſſed of her owne way (for why? Fleſh cannot inherit Gods Kingdome, and a regenerate man is not borne of fleſh, nor from man, but from God) lo, then ſhe ſees all her houſe of oyſterſhells falling downe, then ſhe waxes ſtout with God, and froward with herſelfe; Then ſhe ſcornes the Preacher, if God ſtoppe her not, and rather then ſhe will learne a new way to heaven, ſhe will periſh in her old: Oh! ſhee can tell what belongs to heaven as well as any Preacher of them all! ſhee is not now to beginne; ſhe hath ſo long heard the word, and better Preachers then any now are, have approved her to be ſincere; till theſe curious fellowes came into the place whom none can pleaſe, nor be good enough for them, they were thought ſuch and ſuch! Thus Selfe croſſed of her owne way, prides herſelfe, and waxes ſo coy, that except ſhe may enjoy herſelfe, ſhe ſcornes all men.

1 Cor. 15.

3. *Reaſon.*

Thirdly, this effect muſt needs follow upon Selfe croſſed of her own way, that ſhe muſt be proud and coy; becauſe ſhe foreſees, that if ſhee be caſt downe and humbled in the acknowledgement of her owne baſe error, firſt, ſhe muſt be aſhamed and confounded, and nextly ſhee muſt chuſe herſelf another way, and ſtrike into the way of ſelfe-deniall and faith, ſtrip herſelfe naked, and become as an orphan that hath none to betake himſelfe unto, none to ſhrowd under: Now as ſhee is too proud as yet, to take any ſhame, ſo to take any new courſe, ſhe is too reſty and lazy: To dig ſhe cannot, and to beg ſhe is aſhamed. Therefore as that Steward, ſhe will fall to an eaſier courſe, ſhe will reſolve to ſhift, and be ſtill unjuſt as before, returning to her trade with more boldneſſe.

Luke 16.3.

Vſe 1.

Col.2.end. Gods people muſt beware of the falſe boaſting of ungrounded hypocrites.

I muſt be briefe in this, as being but an entrance into the next branch. Firſt, let it be inſtruction to teach us wiſdome, that wee be not gulled with the glory of Hypocrites and Phariſees, whoſe Religion ſtands in ſhew of humbleneſſe of minde, and not ſparing the fleſh; cauſing all men to gaze at them, and wonder at their humility and devotion: Oh! If ſuch and ſuch be not in the right way, that be ſo lowly, and ſo full of prayers and Religion, God helpe us! But Oh poore wretches! They domineer in their kingdome, and have none to controll them; outwardly they are painted tombs, and ſeeme to crouch and buckle: But diſcover them never ſo little, and put them out of their way, they are as proud and diſdainfull on the other ſide, and no man can ſtand before their envy. What wonder? There is nothing more humble, low, baſe, double diligent, then Selfe in her owne way: But put her out, and nothing ſo proud; bloud, they ſay, out of her veſſell preſently putrifieth: Hold with a Papiſt in his owne courſe, (as alas! ignorance muſt doe ſo!) and what ſhall ye not draw them unto? What may you not have at their hands? They will pull out their very eies to doe you good, they will licke the duſt of your feet: But why? Alas! that by your conſent and allowance, they may ſtiffen themſelves in their error, and draw you into the fellowſhip thereof: all is, their ſelfe-way, ſelfe-religion of the fleſh, which is proud of Gods colours, and that ſhe can pricke up herſelfe with her own feathers; But let truth once convince a Papiſt, give him no hope either of countenancing him any more, or of comming to his Religion, and behold, he will perſecute you to the death: Then will his ſpirit break out!

Selfe in her owne way, jolly, but if put out of it, mad and raging.

Thus

Thus thoſe in Mica 6. would give God thouſands of Rams, tenne thouſand rivers of oile in their owne way; ſo that God would let them alone in their way, they would fine for their Religion, and undoe themſelves, yea offer up their children in ſacrifice: All this was to make God beholding to them, to make all wonder at their bounty; ſtill Selfe lay quiet, and gat warmth in her neſt. But when the Lord comes in with his way, Oh then! when he requires the ſoule to be lowly, when he cries heare O man, what he hath ſaid, and what his way is: Then begins the ſorrow! will ſhe then be ſo zealous to embrace Gods way? No, then ſhe is ſad, and out of all ſorts, ſhe will doe nothing: See whence all that exceſſe of coſt and bounty of impopery hath proceeded; even from mens pleaſing themſelves in their owne way: But croſſe them never ſo little, their almes and good workes periſh in ſullenneſſe of ſpirit, and then all amort: Oh truſt not outſides. Mica 6.

There be many profeſſors of the Goſpel like to theſe: Hold with them in their way of hearing, of duties, of compaſſion, &c. Oh! you ſhall have them as tame as lambes, they will doe any thing for you: But let the Miniſter deale ſadly with them and ſay, Theſe moralities of yours you ought to retaine, but the other and greater things of the Law you ought not to have neglected; and then ſuddenly they become your enemies for telling them the truth. Take an example or two. In the 14. of the Acts, thoſe men of Lyſtra, were ſo low and baſe, as to ſet up *Paul* For Jupiter, and *Barnabas* for Mercury, to make Gods of men: Thus they could be humble in their owne way to rob God of worſhip: But when the Apoſtles perſwaded them to turne from Idolls, to the true God, Oh then! they were ſoone turned from adoring them, to ſtoning of them: So theſe falſhearted Jewes who could outwardly magnifie Chriſt for his miracles, hoping that he would become ſome great man, could ſet him on the Aſſe and proclaime him a King; who yet when they perceived his Kingdome not to be of this world, gave him over and cryed, crucifie him. Beware I ſay leſt we be deceived by ſuch, and let us know no pride is like to the pride of a crouching Phariſee: A Monkiſh and Fryer-like votary, hath more pride in his bare necke without a band, and in his ſhirt collar, beggars habit, and ſeeming ſelf-deniall, then all the gallants and ſwaggerers in the world: Oh! try mens ſpirits, ere ye truſt them: If their humility lye in Gods way, then eſteem them; but if it lye in their own way, abhorre it: For Selfe (as the Prophet ſpeakes of thoſe Idolaters) will abaſe herſelfe to hell, and cares not what ſhe doe, to make her ſeeme that ſhe is not, and to play her parts under a canopy; and the more that ſhe multiplies humilities and abaſements, one upon another, the more ſhe ſeeks to eſtabliſh herſelfe and to eke out her own ſhort garments: A dram of humbleneſſe in a truly broken heart, and in Gods way, will goe beyond all ſuch patchery. See Matth. 21. 9. & 27. 22. Eſay 57. 9.

Secondly, this ſhould be Terror to all ſuch Hypocrites, as turn away their eies from reflecting upon their owne horrible pride, and inveigh againſt others for their pride and ſingularity. Note it, there is not an hypocrite or wil-worſhipper, if he be convinced by the Miniſtery to bee upon a bad bottome, but he will condemne that convincer to be proud, cenſorious, uncharitable, factious, none are good enough for them: But Oh!

Vſe 2. The truly proud alway moſt ready to tax pride in the innocent.

2 Kings

Oh! thou wofull man, whether of the two is the more proud, he that reproves an ungrounded worſhipper of God, and convinces him of his ignorance and ſelfe-love, or he that ſcornes a reproofe? He who never thinkes himſelfe ſufficiently ſettled upon the bare truth and love of the promiſer (being himſelfe deſtitute of all good,) or he who boaſts himſelfe of his owne goodneſſe: Therefore (with our Saviour) I ſay, Hypocrite, firſt caſt out the beame that is in thine owne eye, and then thou ſhalt cleerly ſee to caſt out the mote that is in thy brothers: He may have a mote, but thou haſt a beame, and that doth ſo ſtoppe and put out thine eye, that the more ſelfe-love thou haſt, the leſſe thou ſeeſt in thy ſelfe: If ever the Lord truly caſt downe thy ſoule, thou ſhalt tremble with *Naaman*, to ſee what a world of pride was hidden in thy counterfeit crouching and hypocriſie: Thou ſhalt cry out with that leper and ſay, Oh uncleane! Oh proud wretch! I was humble in a way of mine owne, while I had my will, while all was well taken: But when the Law came and convinced me, that all was from and for my ſelfe, then as *Cain*, ſo did my countenance fall, then I was mad and rebelled like a Tiger: If I had beene truly humble, I ſhould have counted him my friend that would reprove me, and his wounds to be as balme: my kicking againſt the pricks, argued what ſpirit I was of: Oh! let this gaſter all ſuch in Gods feare! And brethren, if there be any ſuch here, let them beſeech him (who can turne all to the good of ſuch as belong to himſelfe) that he would turne all their rebellion, and pride, and coineſſe, to the glory of his name, and the making of their ſoules doubly meeker and humbler then before; for ſo it is, ſinne is out of meaſure ſinfull, both in guilt and rebellion; but grace is out of meaſure gracious to humble the ſoule for both: elſe the word will prove the ſavour of death.

Matth. 7. 5.

Levit. 13. 45.

Vſe 3. Admonition to all ſorts not to claw this itch of Selfe.

Let this be uſe of ſpeciall Admonition to all Gods people, to ſearch and try their owne ſpirits. It is good to ſearch the ſpirits of others: But farre better to try our owne in this weighty caſe. It is good for a Miniſter of God to beware of flattering men of this humor, (for Selfe is proud and coy, becauſe ſhe would be ſoothed) But it is farre better to abhorre flattering of our ſelves in this falſe humbleneſſe of our owne. If *Eliſha* ſhould have come forth and ſoothed *Naaman* in this humor of his, whiles God had him in taming, what a confuſion muſt have followed? No he left him to chew upon Gods bit, and ſo his heart came downe through mercy: But flattery had puft him up to deſtruction: Oh thou Miniſter of Chriſt, or poore Chriſtian! whereſoever thou ſeeſt this itch, claw it not, ſow not pillowes; But above all beware of humoring thy ſelfe in it, and conſider this, If thou canſt be ſo willing in a way of thy owne to take ſuch paines, and to ſeeme ſo low and vile in thine owne eyes, when as yet the Lord and thy ſoule know, all is but to ſerve thine own turn, and to keep a ſecret bredth in thine own looſe heart: Oh! I ſay, if thou canſt take ſuch paines for nought, how wiſe wert thou in ſeaſon to convert thy paines to a right object, I meane the way of God! If thou ſhouldeſt ſay unto me, ſo I would, if I could diſcerne my ſelfe: I anſwer thee, Firſt pray God to ſcatter the miſt from thine eies, which Selfe hath long blinded thee with, through a ſweetneſſe in affording God that pittance which thou couldeſt well ſpare him, and yet hold thine own too.

Miniſters beware of it.

Secondly,

Secondly, ſearch narrowly, and thou ſhalt perceive, that ſelfe-humility hath ſome markes of diſcovery to know her by. Theſe markes be warned againſt.

Markes of Selfe defeated.

1. Coy and queazy.

Firſt, ſhe is very coy and queazy, cannot indure to bee reproved; whereas true humbleneſſe in Gods way, lyes open breſted to receive every point of Gods weapon, to let out her corruption, and all, becauſe ſhee would be rid of it. Learne therefore and bee warned to handle thine heart roughly in this corruption; let none be more jealous and ſuſpicious of thine humblings then thy ſelfe: Be willing that the word teach thee that way of God wherein true humbleneſſe appeares, ſhrug not at it, but give way to it, that it may worke kindly: Refuſe not reproofe; inure not thy ſelfe, to utter or heare thine owne praiſes; thou ſhalt at laſt bleſſe God more for one *Abigail* and her counſell, then for teane flatterers: Too tender skins cannot endure the pricke of a pinne; How ſhould they endure a corraſive then, to eate out their dead fleſh?

2. Lazy.

Secondly this ſelfe-humbleneſſe is lazy, and loath to take paines; it conceives, that if it ſhould be convinced indeed, it muſt be faine to put it ſelfe upon a ſadder way then ſhe is willing to heare of: Abhor this eaſe, be content to be informed of the worſt; the worſt of it is, to abhorre that which would deſtroy thee, and God can give thee a ſafer eaſe in his owne way, if thou canſt truſt him, then thy way can afford, if thou wilt ſuffer thine owne ſpirit to ſtoope to his. Refuſe no paines to amend a rooted error; let it not ſeeme weariſome to thee to change thy courſe, if the word will have it ſo. Thou wilt cenſure a Papiſt that he will live and dye in the Religion of his forefathers, when a better is revealed; dye not thou in the antiquity of ſelfe-deluſion. To be willing to ſubmit to any way of God, for thy good, is a ſure marke of a humbled ſoule.

3. Partiall.

Thirdly, falſe humbleneſſe diſcovers it ſelfe by this, ſhe will love them that ſhould teach her, while they pleaſe her and no further; if thee may not teach them, how to teach her, and put their leſſon in their mouth; ſhe will none of them: Abhorre therefore this marke: Submit thy ſelfe to Gods diſcipline. *Naaman* ſeemed humble, when he ſtood at *Eliſha* his doore, but it was for a vantage; when he had not that he looked for, he became an other man: But learne thou to accept of the labours and counſells of any who are for thy good, though never ſo harſh, meane and deſpiſed inſtruments in the eyes of Selfe; love them beſt, who come moſt againſt her, in the name of the Lord, and crouch as humbly to the pooreſt adviſer in this caſe, as ever thou ſtoopedſt hypocritically in thine owne way.

Laſtly, ſelfe-humility bewraies her ſelfe by this, ſhe is ſeldome in a frame, but alway in her extremities: obſerve thy ſelfe, and thou ſhalt finde the ſymptomes to follow the diſeaſe of *Naaman*: Thou ſhalt be but off and on, out and in, in thy mood very humble, but by and by, ſtout and coy againe: It is not eaſily for a rolling ſtone to lye ſtill: But a falſly humbled heart, will be alway breaking out. As *Salomon* ſpeakes of a diſtempered woman, ſhee may bite in her froward humors for a while, (as an hot gleame in a winters day) but ſhe is overcaſt preſently, and fills her houſe with clamors and chidings, quarrells and paſſions, becauſe ſhe is inwardly turbulent: No painted white face doth ſo differ

Prov 7. 11. 12.

from

2 Kings

from the looke of a bedred man, as the counterfeit humility of Selfe differs from the ingenuous hiew of a lowly ſpirit. Beware therefore of extremities, and till the Lord hath truly brought downe thy winter out of the ſky, know it will never rot there, it muſt be the mercifull calme of grace which muſt bring a ſetled ſtate upon thy ſoule: It is no condition of ſafety to be truſted to, which alway is thus, which yet cannot be avoided till the love of God, come in ſtead of love of Selfe, to enforce the ſoule as by a principle of powerfull perſwaſion, to a ſweet frame of ſpirit well appaid by the promiſe, and abhoring ſuch extremities.

Vſe 4. Be humble in Gods way. Eſay 55. 2.

In which reſpect, laſtly, be exhorted to be humble in Gods way: Be humble in that and ſpare not, there is no feare of exceſſe in the way which God hath chalked out. Be earneſt in prayer for this wiſdome, to ſpend thy labour to purpoſe, and thy ſilver in that which can profit thee: Aſcribe this prerogative to the Lord, that he onely muſt teach the ſoule both how and wherein to expreſſe humility; and account all other, a device of Selfe ſerving to no other end, ſave to barre the Lord out of the ſoule, in the maine point of ſelfe-deniall, and to nouzle up it ſelfe in pride and eaſe: the Lord onely, who knowes the heart, knowes the ſecret baſeneſſe and pride that lurkes therein, and by what meanes it may be beſt ſearched out and purged: For us to affect other waies, and to be humble where God requires it not, is to ſet our ſelves on worke, and to be wiſer then God; and therefore let no ſuch looke for requitall at his hands. God reſiſts all proud ones, and none more then thoſe who are proud under a maske of devotion and humbleneſſe. Let us hearken what God ſaith, and abaſe our ſelves in his way, and then our hearts as well as our habits ſhall be ſo, and we ſhall not loſe our reward. For ſo ſaith Saint *Peter*, he giveth grace to the humble: And he who denieth any thing for me, wealth, credit, wife, child, (having firſt denied himſelfe) ſhall have an hundred fold here, and hereafter eternall life. Let this uſe then be a ſpur to quicken our pace in the uſe of the former doctrine of ſelfe deniall; of which I will now ſpeake no more, having handled it at large. Thus much for this doctrine.

Jam. 4.

1. Part of his diſtemper, Rage.

The other point, and laſt of this verſe, is *Naamans* rage: It may ſeem as ſtrange as the former: For why? What cauſe was given him to carry himſelfe thus? If *Eliſha* had dealt by him, as by *Iehoram*, handled him roughly at the doore, and chaſed him away with diſdaine; If hee had anſwered his requeſt with a ſcorne, as our Saviours did the womans, Matth. 15. Away thou dogge, what haſt thou to doe with childrens bread? Thy diſeaſe is paſt cure, I will not meddle with ſuch a naſty one as thou, an enemy and Champion againſt the Church of God: then indeed had he a juſt cauſe of wrath and rage: But now he hath an anſwer of mercy and love, and hope, from one that ſent for him for the nonce, when he was at a ſet; and lo, becauſe onely he croſſes him in a circumſtance, that is, that he concurres not with his humour, for the manner of curing, but ſends him word of another way, for this alone, hee findes enough in his heart to picke a quarrell, and to depart in a rage! Ah poore wretch! If thou hadſt now ſeene thy waywardneſſe, and fooliſh ſtrugling againſt mercy, thou wouldeſt have abhorred this curſt humor of thine, and wondred that mercy could ſo have encloſed ſuch a rebell in her

The ground of the point opened.

her armes, as to heale him againſt his will! For why? Had it beene but a Phyſitian ſhould have preſcribed a medicine one of ſeven, which he could thinke of, wouldeſt thou have taught him how to cure thee? Would not a Phyſitian have ſaid, If thou be wiſer then I, what doſt thou here? Goe heale thy ſelfe: How is it then, that in a deſperate caſe, onely in Gods power to heale, thou art ſo careleſſe of his counſell, that thou raileſt at the meſſenger, and art ready to goe away in a rage? Oh! this is ſurely for our example (brethren) to learne by: doe not caſt off the point ere it come at you; ſay not that he was an heathen, a Noble man, of great ſpirit, and they will beare no affronts. True it is, ſo hee was: But this was neither the fruit of ignorance properly, nor yet of greatneſſe, (although of both in part) but of that diſeaſe which all of us carry in our boſomes, that is Selfe and ſelfe-love: be wee never ſo enlightned to know the truth, or never ſo meane (for poore ones without grace can be as proud as rich) we may bewray this tetch and diſtemper as well as he! well (beloved) now you have the ground, lay aſide deſcants, and come with meekeneſſe to heare this point, that you may bee rid of this diſeaſe, which though all condemne in *Naaman*, yet few ſee in themſelves.

Doctrine. Selfe defeated rageth.

The doctrine is plaine: Selfe if ſhe be defeated of her hopes rageth: *Naaman* whiles he had hopes, is at eaſe and a good point, he waites and is patient; now comes this croſſe errand that turnes him over, as drinke doth a drunkard, now he can hold no longer; his patience turnes wearineſſe, and waxes madneſſe: I doubt not but you ſee the bottome; yet I doubt not but you would be glad to ſee it cleared; marke then a little thoſe texts and reaſons which ſerve for it, and ſo lead to the application of it to your ſelves. Take that behaviour of the yong man for one proofe, who comming in a deepe foreſtalledneſſe of conceit to our Saviour, that his caſe to Godward was good, and yet thinking ſo highly of Chriſt, that he could enforme him, thought it not amiſſe to aske, Good Maſter, what ſhall I doe to be ſaved? Our Saviour to beat downe his courage, ſends him to the Law, ſaying, Keep the commandments: He being prepared, and hoping to be riveted into his courſe by the mouth of truth, (as men if they can get but halfe a word from a Preacher of comfort, they are ſafe ever after) anſwers, All theſe have I kept from my youth. Our Saviour not to eſtabliſh any rule (as Papiſts dream) but to quaſh his ſelfe-love, replies, then thou haſt need of an eleventh command to be doing with, ſeeing thou haſt kept the tenne, Goe ſell all, and thou ſhalt have heaven: what a pickle is hee in upon this! Oh (thought he!) this is yrkeſome, this is to beat me off quite, ſurely if it bee thus, I am wrong, and have beene long defeated; my wealth I am loath to foregoe, and therefore he went away ſorrowfull. What is that? Secretly vexing at his lot, out of love with Chriſt, ſad and diſcontent, fretting and diſtempered at the counſell. Another example (for the ground of all reſts upon a fact) may be their practice, of whom we read, Eſay 58. who faſted and ſought the Lord from ſelfe-love, (as appeares by the context) that they might under pretence, pleaſe and flatter themſelves the more in their oppreſſion, and ſtoppe conſcience from biting and ſtinging them. Now when they perceived this was no way to ſpeed, and

Matth. 19. 22.

2 Kings

and themſelves would beteame the Lord no other, they fly out intemperately and chalenge God himſelfe: Why (ſay they) have wee faſted and thou regardeſt not? Oh! they were ſo madded, that they could have flowen in Gods face! Is this the fruit of all our care and coſt, that wee cannot have thanke? Away ye wretches, ye faſt a meale from ſome meat and drinke, but you have pleaſure within, for you feaſt with your bribery and ſtealth, and exceſſe of covetouſneſſe. Is this a faſt? Doe I regard the bowing of a bulruſh, when as the ſoule is ſurfeted with luſts, and the ſoule is neither afflicted, nor ſeekes reconciliation? No, no, I abhore it. Marke, becauſe they cannot get God to be like them, nor bribe him with all their gifts and gloſing ſelfe-denialls: lo, they fall out with him downe right, and bid him goe ſeeke his ſervice. A third place is yet more evident, Mal. 3. where the Prophet brings in other the like hypocrites to theſe, who had both tried God, or tired him rather, with their abſtinences, and faſtings, not from meat onely, but from many ſinnes, (ſo that theſe were better then *Eſay* his men) but lo, they are croſſed of their hopes, they could not ſpeed of their purpoſe, to be accepted and in high favour with God, ſtill he lowred upon them and would not be friends: And why? Becauſe they did all from a falſe bottome of Selfe, and to a baſe end, to ſteale away favour from God: And what is the iſſue? Surely they cry out upon God, and tell him to his face, that he cannot diſcerne betweene his friends and his foes, he favours them that ſweare and play the Idolaters, as thoſe that worſhip him, and feare an oath: And who will ſerve ſuch a Maſter? But thoſe that feared God, and eſteemed rewards, not by outward bleſſings, but that hundred fold of peace and comfort; they cried them downe as faſt as theſe did the Lord, they rage alſo at their lot who fare better then they: Referre hither the diſcontent and rage of the Prodigalls elder brother, Luke 15. 22. And it were endleſſe to inſiſt in examples: What elſe is the ſcope of that wretched anſwer, I ſaw thou wert an hard Maſter, who reapedſt and gatheredſt where thou ſowedſt or ſtrawedſt not, I ſaw little came of thy ſervice, I therefore buried thy talent, take thine owne to thy ſelfe, and looke for no more at my hands. Even as it fareth with hirelings, ſo doth it with hypocrites, no longer then their turne is ſerved, do they regard the worſhip of God, for they looke at a vantage, either of ſome outward bribe from God, or to delude conſcience, and when neither, or not both ſucceed to their minde, they fall off.

1. *Reaſon.*

Reaſons hereof there are many. Firſt, whatſoever the naturall and proper ſupport of a thing is, if that faile, the thing failes; whether it be a neceſſary or voluntary ſubject. The fire if ye remove fuell, the belly if you deny meate, the flatterer who lives by breath, if ye withdraw countenance: So long as their oile laſts, their lampe ſhines, but take that away, and it goes out: So doth the hypocrite, when his hope failes, his belly burſts: That phraſe in Mica 6. bewraies them, wherewith ſhall we gratifie the Almighty? As thoſe in the Acts, ſeeing the Divell caſt out of the maid and their gaine gone, and *Demetrius* robbed of his ſhrines, made an uproare preſently: The Divell ſpake ſhrewdly, when hee ſaid, Thou haſt hedged him in round about, hee ſerves thee not for nought: But now, doe but touch him, and hee will curſe thee

Act. 16. 19.
Act. 19. 24.
Job 1.

to

to thy face. If he had not miſtaken the man, hee had not miſtaken his marke.

Secondly, that effect which commonly followes a leſſer cauſe in a ſmaller degree, followes a greater in a fuller degree. *Salomon*, Prov. 13. 12. tells us, That the deferring of the hope, is the fainting of the ſoule. By the ſame reaſon, the defeating of the hope, muſt needs be the vexation of it. 2. *Reaſon.*

Thirdly, looke what we ſee to fall out in meer naturall diſappoints, muſt needs much more befall in ſpirituall: For the more deſirable the object, the greater is the coveting, and the ſadder the diſappoint. Now this fury and madneſſe is common in naturalls. *Athalia* being defeated of her ſonne, riſes up and playes the mad tyrant, and deſtroyes all the Kings Seed (though in a ſort ſhe tooke this opportunity:) So *Herod* being defeated of the wiſe men, ſlew all the males at Bethlem: much more then in ſpiritualls. 3. *Reaſon.* 2 King 11. 1. Act. 12.

Fourthly, that which is ſeene in ſpiritualls of inferiour nature, much more appeares in an higher nature, when men are defeated. *Ionas* in a caſe, not ſo reall or weighty, (becauſe it concerned the defeat of others, rather then his owne) yet was wondrous tetchy, even at the converſion of Ninivee (thinking it to threaten Iſrael,) yea he was ſicke of vexation, and deſperate in his defeat; and all, becauſe he might not propheſie to the deſtruction of the City, rather then the converſion: How much more when the ſpirituall defeat concernes the ſoule it ſelfe neerly toward God. 4. *Reaſon.*

Fifthly, it muſt needs be, that whereſoever the ſuppoſed attaining of that which an unſound heart coveteth, would breed a great, yea too great and exceſſive rotten joy and content; there the defeat of the ſame thing muſt breed an exceeding diſcontent. But the hypocrite when hee thinkes that his hope is ſatisfied, and hath his deſire, (for he deceives himſelfe) is exceedingly joyed; needs therefore muſt he be diſquieted when he is defeated. See it in an illuſion, *Ionahs* gourd cauſed an idle yet extreame content, more then ſuch a bable ſhould; therefore when the Lord ſmote it, he was moſt baſely diſtempered. The ſuddener the raiſing up of the ſeed was in the gravelly ground, the ſuddener was the withering of it. A little to inſiſt upon this: There is no feaſt with ſtollen bread and waters, ſo ſweet as the feaſt of hypocrites, who live upon ſtealth from God: To ſeeme to have gotten a felicity by our owne wit and induſtry, without ſelfe-deniall, is more then to joy in treaſures of gold and ſilver; becauſe it reſembles a principle that ſtill affords it from a fountaine: And indeed, if an inferiour could match the opperations of a ſuperiour, if nature I mean, could walke in the furniture of grace, it were great wonderment. Unuſuall attainments, breed impotent joyes, as when a child of twelve or thirteene, reaches the learning of an elder of nineteene or twenty, when a woman gets arts and tongues, it breeds a very ſickneſſe. How much more here? For a Phariſee to carry away heaven as ſheere, as a beleeving Saint, I wonder not, if it puffe up with exceſſive boaſt and triumph (as baſe as it is) for they ſeeme (with *Iacob* to have overcome God! when then the Lord ſhall take ſuch in hand, convincing, diſappointing and confounding their conſciences, turning 5. *Reaſon.* Jonah 4.

2Kings

them out of all as beggars and banquerupts (as he will doe all whom hee will ſave, and ſome whom he will not) Oh! we may well conceive what wrath and rage it worketh.

6. *Reaſon.*

Laſtly, we know wrath is a ſhort madneſſe: now mad men put no difference betweene any. If a King ſhould come in a mad mans way, he would ſtrike him as ſoone as a beggar. So doth Selfe defeated: She puts no difference between God and men: She will ſometime chuſe men to whet herſelf on, ſometime God himſelf: She curſeth her luck and bad fortune, the weather if too wet, too dry, too hot or too cold, her ill lot and ſucceſſe, her ill market, her enemies, any thing that comes in her way: what wonder then if ſhe ſpare not Gods Miniſter, yea God himſelfe? She luſteth after envy, as Saint *Iames* ſaith, and out of an ill cuſtome and habit, growes to be as old with God as with men, if hee croſſe her, ſhe knowes not, ſhe is not capable of ſubjection. So much for reaſons of the point.

Amplification. The godly themſelves, ſo farre as led by Selfe, rage, if diſappointed.

Nay more, that which I have ſaid of hypocrites, may be verified (in meaſure, and with limitation) even of the godly, ſo farre as they are unmortified and led by this Spirit of Selfe; though not totally, yet in any particular caſe of error and deluſion; ſo farre as they forſake the promiſe, and goe to worke by their owne conjectures and ſtrength, as in zeale and prayers, (wherein a good man may reſt too much upon himſelfe, no doubt the Divell and their corruption feaſts them but too much; (as one ſaid, he never ſeemed ſo zealous, as before God mortified his owne ſpirit, but after he found prayer another gates worke;) But when the Lord ſeparates the pretious from the vile, and ſhewes them the vanity and wanzingneſſe of their owne principle, it becomes as the very ſting of an adder; onely the the ods is, an hypocrite is fretted with ſuch a diſtemper, as commonly, makes him no better; but the regenerate is wholeſomely ſmitten by God, to cauſe him with ſhame and ſorrow to abhorre hmſelfe, and to crouch and runne under the wings of a better friend, who can give him content from a better fountaine, and of a more laſting nature.

Yet with difference from hypocrites.

Object.

But here comes an objection to be anſwered: How comes it to paſſe then, there being ſo many unſound and hollow ones in the world (never more then now, as appeares by their groſſe and foule revolts,) how is it that we ſee them ſo joviall and merry ſtill, and heare of ſo few diſcontents and troubles in their lives or deaths?

Anſw. Selfe doth not rage till defeated.

To which I anſwer, That the reaſon thereof is, becauſe they have no defeates: Selfe in her quietneſſe and jollity rages not, but when ſhee meets with affronts, either by diſappointments, or by terrors of the Law, convincing and ſlaying the ſoul: The ſoule in this caſe is abaſed and caſt down, either wholeſomely as by a ſtep to humiliation, or elſe ſlaviſhly, & then ſhe ſhifts and goes forward in a rotten courſe: But Self rageth nevertheleſſe: Note the difference: In ſuch as God will ſave, the diſcovery of this Selfe and the ſubtilty thereof, ſhall humble the conſcience, and worke a kindly change by degrees; but yet Selfe and corruption will rage and rebell, being loath to give place: But as for the reſt, both Selfe and conſcience together may not rage, becauſe the Law hath not put an enmity betweene them, ſtill they hold in together as body and members incorporate

Or elſe recovers her ſelfe againe by her own ſubtilty.

incorporate in each other, and not divorced. This by the way. But marke, The Lord doth not alway bleſſe the word to worke a defeat of Selfe in every hypocrite or unregenerate perſon, neither doe all ſuch meete with ſuch defeats: Rather the Lord ſuffers ſuch juſtly to ſtumble at the blocks laid in their owne way by themſelves: As they choſe error and deluſion, ſo the Lord leaves them to Satan to be more deluded, and ſo they fall, (as *Ahab* by his falſe Prophets) becauſe being taught the truth ſoundly, they have preferred their owne eaſe and liberties to it. Nay more, the Lord ſuffers many ſuch (and it is a common thing in theſe declining dayes) to be ſo farre from meeting with defeats, that rather they are habited in their waies, erring by neceſſity, ſeeing no danger: They are inchanted ſo with this cup of Selfe, that it hath caſt them into a deepe ſleepe, and they are as one aſleepe in the toppe of the maſt, no buffetings will ſtartle them out of their courſe: And it were well with ſome, that this were all: For the uncleane ſpirit returnes into many, and imbarkes himſelfe in them more ſtrongly then before, defiling them with ſuch luſts as they lye open unto ſpecially, and bringing them into ſuch a confuſed perplexity, ſome by their uncleanneſſe, ſome by intemperancy, ſome by their open prophaneneſſe, that they never outgrow it, but goe on with waſted and ſeered conſciences, to their dying day, without remorſe: Although ſuch as belong to God, ſhall return even by theſe unwelcome batterings; for the Lord ſaw, that elſe their fuſty ſavour and taſte would never have gone out. So much for anſwer to this objection.

Ezek. 14.

1 King. 22.

Selfe may want defeats being given over by God to deluſion and hardning.

Matth. 12.

This doctrine falls point blanke upon many of us (brethren) to ſhame us for our diſtempers. And firſt, let it bee Terror to all ſuch as walke with this curſed heart of wrath, impatience and diſcontent, daily and hourely, carrying it as hot coales in their boſome, and yet through habit, never burnt, not marking it in themſelves. Oh wofull creature! Is *Naaman* here ſo blameworthy, (being an heathen and defeated of his will,) for his rage and diſtemper? What ſhall become of thee then, who art in continuall wrath and vexation? Not in a fit (as *Paul* calls it, Ephe. 4.29.) but as it were in a falling ſickneſſe: Truly brethren, I wrong *Naaman* to make him the text of ſuch a commentary! I tremble to thinke how many preſent themſelves here duly at the worſhip of God, who yet in their uſuall courſe are never quiet, neither in themſelves, nor with others! They are (as I may ſay) ſteept in vinegar; rarely ſhall you finde them other then froward, waſpiſh, envious, bitter and diſtempered: and yet no defeat appeares to heat their bloud, as here in *Naaman*; they are ſo in very coole bloud, out of the ſurquedry of their wickedneſſe, they are alway diſtempered, becauſe wicked: There is no peace (ſaith my God to the wicked. More like *Nabals*, then *Naamans*; of whom his owne ſervants could ſay, he was ſo wicked, that no man might ſpeake to him. As the Apoſtle in Rom. 1. deſcribes thoſe heathen Romans full of all wickedneſſe, as a toad is full of venome, top full of wrath, rage, malice; as a veſſell ſtanding full to the brimme cannot be touched, but they will runne over. *Nabal* being ſaluted by *Davids* men curteouſly, (perhaps by the name of Lord, or worſhipfull) anſwers with nicknames, of rogue and runnagate! Is not here an heart top full of rage and madneſſe? Oh (brethren!)

Vſe 1. Terror.

1. Branch. Wrathfull and diſcontented perſons, reproved.

Becauſe raging in coole bloud.

Eſay 57. ult.

2 Kings

(brethren!) I remember what *Salomon* ſaith of neighbourhood, Prov. 3. 29. Live quietly with thy neighbour, and hurt him not, for he liveth ſecurely by thee: What is that? Hee meanes well and peaceably towards thee, and lookes for no other from thee.

Prov. 24 21.

And art thou ſo fierce, curriſh and churliſh a *Nabal*, that even when thou mightſt live in the midſt of thy people (as ſhe told *Eliſha*) thou delighteſt to play the tyrant and termagant among them! I tell thee, *Naaman* is a Saint in compariſon of ſuch a Divell, nay worſe, for the Divell himſelfe if pleaſed is quiet: Some of you have by your ſinne in this kinde got brands of infamy upon your ſelves, you are noted for your intemperance of ſpirits, as not fit to live in a ſociety! Oh! then goe out into the wilderneſſe apart, and build you cottages among the wild beaſts! And yet they are better then you, for Beares will agree with Beares, and each beaſt with her kinde; but man to man is a wolfe and a Divell! Oh, make your peace with God, for till that worke be over, the baſe heart is like the ſea that continually rageth! weigh well what I ſay: Should any man or woman here, ſo carry himſelfe, that no man ſhould care for their company, but count themſelves beſt, when furtheſt off? Beware leſt you meet with your match! And leſt you that bite and ſnarle be devoured by others! I have noted it, that nothing will coole ſome mens ſpirits, till they meet with ſuch as tame and taw them, and bring them ſo low by ſutes of Law, and cruſh them by their power, that they make them weary of their parts! Then at laſt they cry out, wofull wretch, was I the onely man in a Towne, who by my fierce ſpirit frayed all men from deſire of my company? Such a *Nabal* as could not live quietly with my wife, (though an *Abigail*) nor with my ſervants (though too good for me) nor with my neighbours, (who yet lived ſecurely by me) and were far from hurting me! Oh! If I might now be out of the clawes of ſuch as teare and devoure me, how glad would I be of them all! What a Lambe ſhould they live with in ſtead of a Lion! It is well that harſhneſſe and violence of greater oppoſites can effect that, which love and curteſie could never effect.

2 King. 4. 13

2. Branch. If they be ſo being full, how much more faſting?

But to adde one thing more: Tell me (I beſeech you) are theſe ſo fell and raging when no man provokes them? What are they then, when they are oppoſed, wronged and defeated? Surely like Beares robbed of their whelpes! Oh! then we thinke we may lawfully ſet up our briſtles! then we may threaten, quarrell, goe to Law, revenge: for why? Were we not provoked? If they would have let us alone, wee would have beene as faire and curteous as Lambes; but if they will ſtirre us, they ſhall know what mettall we are made of. Doe they know us, what men, how wealthy, great, and how much their betters? Dare they croſſe us? Why? Who art thou, O thou earth, earth, earth, duſt and aſhes, ſinne and poyſon? Who may not know thee by thy colours? Who ſees thy ſmoaking noſtrills, fiery face, ſparkling eies, who heares thine oaths, blaſphemies, curſings and rage, but he muſt needs know what houſe thou commeſt of? What ſet thy heart, or thy tongue on fire, but hell? Who need aske who is the father of ſuch as thou? Oh! the leaſt word uttered awry, the leaſt conceit taken, or pritch, the breaking in of a cow into their grounds, yea ſheepe or pigges, is enough to

Jam. 3. 6. 1 Sam. 10. 12.

to make ſutes, and they will be revenged, kill and ſlay, who art thou that maiſt not be croſſed? Who hath more croſſed, yea curſed others then thou? Humble thy ſelfe (Oh wormes meat) and ſay to thy ſelfe in ſecret, Oh wretch! If thine heart were tame and quiet, the Lord would make even thine enemies thy friends! he who cauſed *Iacob* to ſay of *Eſau*, Behold I have ſeene thy face this day, Gen. 33. 10. as the face of God, could turne all this to a calme, if there were not a controverſie betweene him and thee, which till it be decided, know thou, that thy rage and wrath equalls not his righteouſneſſe, he can match thee himſelfe; yea although thou ſhouldeſt fight againſt heaven it ſelfe, and dare the Lord with thy pride and diſtemper, yet he can reſiſt the proudeſt ſtomacke, and bring it low, and by that time he hath done with thee, he will make thee ſuch a poore worme as that no man ſhall know thee indeed to be the party: And therefore while thou maiſt, be glad to abate thy fierce heart, agree with thine adverſary quickly, while he is in the way, leſt if once his wrath be kindled, thou periſh in it! then happy are they who know themſelves (whether others know them or no) and who can poſſeſſe their ſoule with moderation and meekeneſſe. So much for the ſecond branch of Terror.

But to end this uſe, and to goe one ſteppe further, what thinke ye becomes of Self, when ſhe doth any ſpeciall work thankworthy, and yet is defeated of her hope? Surely then ſhe thinkes ſhe may be mad by priviledge: For ſuch men looke that their good deſerts, ſhould (as a ſtreame) beare downe all their faults to eternall forgetfulneſſe, and procure them endleſſe thanke: Spy out any of their follies, or lowre upon their merits, and they are mad by thoſe defeats. Take an example of each. *Abners* warlike valour was the proppe of *Sauls* rotten houſe; It fell out that hee defiled *Sauls* concubines. *Iſhboſheth* takes him up for it. What ſaith he for himſelfe? Am I a dogge that thou ſhouldeſt ſo ſpeake unto me, ſo take me up for this woman? God doe ſo to me and more, if I reſtore not this day, the Kingdome to *David*! He could not beare it: So *Ioab* (juſt like him) having cut off *Abſolon* in a dangerous warre, and reſtored *David*: *David* (unſeaſonably) falls a mourning! what doth *Ioab*? So rageth that he comes and dares *David* thus to his face, Now I ſee if *Abſolon* had beene alive, though we had all dyed, thou wouldeſt have liked it well? But I ſweare by the Lord, if thou come not forth and ſhew thy ſelfe, all thy people ſhall goe away from thee; it is enough to name theſe examples: Let us all abhorre this bitter curſed roote of ſelfe-defeated rage, and as we would loath it in matter of Religion, ſo let it be odious to us even towards men; accuſtoming our ſelves to be content, though wee heare ill when we have done well, which is a royall grace indeed.

Selfe if ſhe have well deſerved, and yet be ſlighted, is moſt intemperate.

See 2 Sam. 3. 8.

2 Sam. 19. 7.

Secondly, this alſo may be juſt reproof to others (though not ſo ranke as the former) and theſe are of many ſorts. Firſt, ſuch as although they live in a bad courſe and know it, yet are no ſooner convinced thereof, but they cavill againſt God himſelf, and lay him in all the fault; they would as faine be better as the Preacher, and they cannot deny, but they are farre from that they ſhould be: But theſe Miniſters they ſay, would goe beyond God, and have them better then God will make them; which cannot be, for till God change and mend us all, we can be no better, let

Vſe 2. Reproofe.

2 Kings

men teare their tongues to the ſtumps. And and whence is this cavill? Truly from baſe prophane Selfe, which is croſſed in her way, imagining that becauſe it is eaſie for God to worke as he pleaſe, and the worke of converſion is onely his, therefore they may live the whilſt as baſely, idely, and prophanely as they liſt: They would have grace droppe out of the clouds on the ſuddaine into them, that their hearts might all at once be humbled, comforted, and turned to God, before they bee aware, and then they thinke they might ſcape a great deale of trouble that others meet with, who are ſo reſtleſſe, painfull and unwearied in the uſe of the means: For their own part they will uſe good means too on the Sunday, and come to Church and heare; but they will waite till God worke?

Cavillers against God as if he were in fault for all their error, convinced.

To whom I anſwer, The Lord rebuke all ſuch wretches! God open their eies! For tell me I pray you, theſe waiters upon God, how live they the whiles? Moſt looſely, deny themſelves no liberty, luſt or will of their owne, but laſh it on upon the ſcore, till grace come and wipe off all; they ſpare for no ſinne committing, to be lewd companions, drinkers, covetous or the like: For why ſhould they? If heaven will be favourable, it can pardon great, as well as ſmall offences: If it will not, in vaine ſhould they ſtrive! For they have no ſtrength of their owne (they confeſſe) to reſtraine from any ſuch courſes till God turne their hearts; & then you ſhall ſee what manner of perſons they will be, when they be of Gods making, you ſhall ſee what new men they ſhall be: But oh you white Divells! you that turne rebellion into ſmoothneſſe, and play the ſtill ſwine who eate up all the draffe, how ſhould ſuch as you ever come into Gods mint to be new ſtamped? I denounce unto you, that all your hypocriſie tends to the vailing over of your ſinne; it is not grace you ſeeke, if your breſts were open, hell and deſtruction are there, and the way of peace you have not knowne: Peace you would have, pardon and heaven, Gods love and favour, but your curſed wills you would not forgoe: And therefore that ye would have, (mercy I meane) you ſhall never have, and what ye would ſhunne, you ſhall for ever inherit, even woe and wrath.

I know ſome of this ſort are not ſo prophane as others; but feed themſelves with duties and moralities, a ſmooth way of Religion, and ſo wait: But who hath taught ſuch to eſcape the wrath to come, by their ſloth and eaſe? What although it be our ſtrength to ſit ſtill? Muſt we therefore ſuſpend our labour, paines and uſe of meanes? Will God be found in a way of eaſe, of yawning deſires, and lazy hopes, which abhorre to be guided Gods way, and to come to his oath and covenant of humiliation, aith and ſelfe-deniall? No neither the prophane, nor the lazy, ſhall enter into his reſt, no more then the rebellious: They maintaine a ſecret diſtemper and pritch of heart, and tetch of ſelfe againſt God, and either will be ſaved their owne way, or not at all: And therefore to theſe I alſo profeſſe (with ſharpe reproofe) The way to peace yee have not knowne, neither will; you rather will quarrell with God for not fulfilling you wills, to make you ſuch as you would bee, without your trouble: This way God never knew: Nay, I ſay more, Though God would ſave you, yet you would not, if ye might; and I may ſay truly,

Matth. 3. Eſay 30.

truly, ſalvation it ſelfe cannot ſave ſuch as would not, becauſe it ſaves none but the willing. Pull downe your curſed ſpirits, and ceaſe to kicke againſt the pricks, for till you be content to abandon your luſts and eaſe, you doe ſecretly cavill with him, whom you ſhall never be able to make your cauſe good againſt; you ſtand not right in your plea, the Court is Gods, & the judgement is his, who ſhall curſe all weapons formed againſt himſelfe, and condemne all thoſe moſt juſtly who cavill againſt him. Therefore I ſay againe, take this word of reproofe with meekeneſſe, and ſit ſtill in the point of cavilling, but abhorre to goe againſt Gods edge by your prophanenſſe, or your eaſe; for the Lord will never beleeve, that either of theſe will ever be content to finde mercy, though they might enjoy it: And as *Eſau* when time came would have had the bleſſing, but yet would be ſtill a ſenſuall Epicure, and therefore it was finally denyed him: So I ſay to you, If in truth you would have grace, pray to God to plucke up that roote of bitterneſſe which ſprings up in you; for that will defile you faſter then all your idle and falſe wiſhes can cleanſe you, and no wonder if you well weigh it!

2 Kings

Eſay 54. ult.

Heb. 12.

And ſecondly here come to be cenſured all ſuch as go yet a ſteppe further, and will cloſe with meanes, and be deepe in paines taking, but then when they ſee that God will take no paines for full price, but for ſerving his owne grace, and good pleaſure onely: then they fret and fume at their lot, becauſe God regards not their labours: What ſay they? Is this equity, that the Lord ſhould alike eſteeme of the painfull and the lazy? I anſwer thee, yea if Selfe defeated be the caviller: Thou takeſt paines it ſeemes, that thou mighteſt be warme by thine owne ſparkles, and have ſomewhat to alledge why God ſhould regard thee! That is, thou wouldeſt have him for thy ſake, to forſake his owne way, and turne free grace into wages: And becauſe he will not (as indeed hee never will be a ſervant to the runner or the willer) therefore thou fretteſt and fumeſt at him, for not ſerving thy turne. But oh man! Who art thou that diſputeſt with God? Shall the axe quarrell with him that cutteth with it? I anſwer thee therefore, The Lord doth not ſimply equall thee with ſuch as take no paines, keepe thy paines ſtill, and if thou wilt, adde more unto them, but rather take away thy upbraiding ſpirit; doe that thou doſt with meekneſſe, and be content to ſinke in thy coſtes, and be as nothing, an unprofitable one when thou haſt done all, caſt not God in teeth with them, call not for them backe againe, nor bring him his owne in a napking: For theſe qualities poyſon all thy labours, and drive the Lord further off, rather then draw him nearer: And when thou haſt turned all thy ſelfe-defeated diſcontent into ſelfe-deniall, and art willing that the Lord ſhould doe with thee as he liſt, then ſee how he will diſpoſe of thee: A little barley or an handfull of meale with a little oile ſhall make a more accepted meat offering to him (with an heart willing to be at his diſpoſe) then all thy plenty of coſtly ſacrifices without it!

2. Branch. Selfewilled ones who binde God to their labours, convinced.

Rom. 9. 13. 14.

Gods hearers will be at Gods diſpoſe for bleſſing.

Joel. 2. 13.

Laſtly, it reproves all ſuch, as yet goe beyond theſe alſo, and are content to ſubmit humbly to all ſuch waies as the Lord preſcribes for the attaining of mercy, but yet it mightily troubles them, that God doth ſo delay his ſeaſon, and lets them goe ſo long without giving them their deſire.

3. Branch.

2Kings

Waiting upon God neceſſary for ſuch as looke to ſpeed of grace.

deſire. To whom I anſwer, All yee have done hitherto is well. Adde one thing more, give all your humbleneſſe, your labours, your endeavours to God, and when you have waited upon him therein, give him your waiting too, (for it is not too good for him) perhaps there may be a Selfe in that alſo, and ſure it is, the finer Selfe is ſpunne, the more ſhe will take pritch if ſhe be defeated. But be thou as *Paul* was, 2 Cor.12.9. who feeling no bottome in himſelfe, yet was content to be under that weakneſſe, and all to try what mercy could doe: doubtleſſe in ſuch a caſe, thou ſhalt finde that grace ſhall at leaſt bee ſufficient for thee, if the Lord doe not alſo magnifie his power (beyond expectation) in thy infirmity: And poore ſoule! what gaineſt thou in the mean while by thy carking, plodding and caſting about with thy ſelfe? If thou doe thy duty, ſhall it not be well with thee? And haſt thou not a great recompence in this, that thou art accepted, and thy ſucceſſe is with God? Is it not much that a ſinfull wretch who cannot lay claime to the aire, earth, water, to breath in, to tread upon, and the like, maiſt yet come and looke up to heaven with hope, and come to the Lord as bound by his promiſe? Alas! his pay may be leaſurely, but it is ſure; the gaines may ſeeme ſmall, but ſtill they are comming, and will make a heavy purſe at laſt: And what? Is there not ſome ſcurffe which the Lord muſt purge out, thinke you? Hath not a long courſe in evill hardned thee? And may not a ſpeedy courſe of thine owne, hurt the more another way? What if the Lord ſhould leave thee to ſuch corruption of thine owne, as ſhould cauſe thee to wax wanton, were it not better prevented by longer delay? And ſpeake the truth, (to ſhame the Divell and thy ſlaviſh heart) is it not better with thee at ſometimes then at other? If it be not, ſuſpect thy ſelfe; if it be, ſuſpend thy cavils; ceaſe thine enmity, thine hard thoughts, thine unbeteaming heart, the Lord loves to be as freely thought of for his love as he deſerves: And for thy ſelfe, if it be thy lot to lye longer under hope then others, and to want the cheerings which ſome have, yet ſure it is, if thou abide waiting in thine innocency, (not being tainted with ſhrewd dregs of thine owne ſtale and baſe heart) the Lord will at length breake out ſo much the more in pitty to thy fainting ſoule, by how much his delay hath made thee waite ſo long, and it ſhall not then trouble thee that thou haſt thus indured: Mercy at laſt ſhall be ſweeteſt to thee, that thou faile not wholly. Singularity of delay, ſometimes argueth an heart tainted with Selfe in more then a common manner. And ſo much for the uſe of reproofe.

Eſay 57.16.

Vſe 3. Great men muſt ſubmit their great ſpirits to God.

Laſtly, to finiſh this point, and ſo draw to an end: Let this be Admonition both ſpeciall and generall. Firſt ſpeciall, to ſuch as are *Naamans*, great ones in place, renowne, authority, birth or any other worth above others, *viz.* That their great ſtomacks riſe not up in arms againſt God to quarrell with him, when they are croſſed in their owne hopes and expectations: The truth is, the ſtreame of Selfe is ranke enough of it ſelfe, though there be no oile added to the flame: The pooreſt wretch could ſay, though I am not ſo rich as thou, yet I have as proud an heart as thou: But yet, when one ſtreame meets another, the flood is the greater: Great men who thinke it a peece of their Nobleneſſe to take no affronts at any mans hand, what ever it coſt them, had need deny themſelves farre, to

get

get a ſubject heart even to God himſelfe: Their great bloud, the repute of their owne eminency and parts exempts them (in their owne opinion) from the common lot; as we read of him, who having firſt raged at *Eliſha* (as the ſuppoſed cauſe of the famine) ſaying, God doe ſo, and ſo, if his head ſtand on him this day; after being greeted by him more diſcurteouſly then he looked for, flew in Gods face too, and ſaid, ſhall I attend on the Lord any longer? As once a great Prince being croſſed of his paſtime by the weather, told God (ſwearingly) he was a King too, and he offered him ill meaſure ſo to defeat him. *Abner* the pillar of *Sauls* houſe, being but reproved by weake King *Iſhboſheth* (ſet up by himſelfe) for medling with his fathers concubines, tooke it ſo hainouſly that he forthwith revenges himſelfe, and betraies the Crowne to *David*: Great men therefore ſwell eaſily if defeated, and indeed theſe two were as bad as great, but the beſt in this kinde take defeats heavily. Let ſuch conſider that which *Naaman* (if he had had the knowledge which they have) would ſoone have noted, *viz.* How deſperate a thing it is to fight againſt God, and to croſſe him, when he ſerves not our turne? If God reſiſt all proud ones, & eſpecially great ones, how much more proud reſiſters? Pride being of it ſelf a reſiſtance: Although your ſpirits riſe up ſoon againſt men, (which yet I allow not) beware ye be not found fighters againſt God: Know that though men accept your perſons, yet God puts no difference, eſpecially in matter of ſalvation: It is counted a great humility in a great one, to be never ſo little humble. But oh worme! (for what is the greateſt fleſh, elſe?) if thou thinke it equall that a poore beggar ſhould ſtoop to thee, what ſhouldeſt thou do to God, to whoſe eminency, thine is as the drop of a bucket?

2 King. 6.

Ver. ult.

2 Sam. 3. 6.

Act. 5.

Take not upon thee, (though thou be the chiefe of the Pariſh, the Lord of the Towne, and Patron of the Miniſter) to yoke him to any other conditions in point of reproving thee impartially then the meaneſt: If he do his duty faithfully, turne not away in a fume, ſcare him not with thy lookes, change not thine heart to him, nor thinke his love leſſe towards thee therefore; rather rejoice that God hath given thee ſo faithfull an overſeer, which few ſuch have the happineſſe to injoy, much leſſe play thy parts with God in this kinde, but ſubject thy ſelfe to the authority of the promiſe, as humbly as the meaneſt, he hath little to take to upon earth, and all thou haſt cannot helpe thee, without the good will of him that dwelt in the buſh: God hath chaines for Princes: Deny thy ſelfe, cleave to the bare truth of the promiſe, try it as well as thou wilt, as thoſe noble Beræans did) but when thou haſt done, ſeeke no other way to heaven, ſave it: Heaven lies no more open to a Noble mans performances and merits, then a pezants; all were digged out of one rocke, therefore count it thy Nobility, to give God his honour by beleeving, and count it more preſumptuous to affront him in point of his honour, then any mans affronting thee; there is but one way for thee, and the pooreſt, to heaven: cleave to it with an heart as low as the pooreſt; God will count more highly of a great little heart, then a ſmall little one, and ſtoope to this point in hand alſo: *David* never got ſuch intereſt in Gods affections by his Crowne, as by his poverty of ſpirit. Inure thy ſelfe to take a defeat from God without rage, yea unkindneſſe. An Em-

Pſal. 149. 8. Act. 17. 11.

perour

2Kings

perour for his Crowne could ſtand bare foote at the gate of a baſe Pope till he releaſed him, and ſhalt thou thinke much to caſt thy coronet at the feet of this Emperour? Oh! waite (even thou) at the gates of God unweariedly, and although it be long ere he heare thee, and although Self in thee would ſwell, yet beat it down & wait ſtill, till the Lord ſend thee away with *Naamans* anſwer. Conſider if thou turn away with him from God, whither ſhalt thou go? Shall hy wealth and honour ſave one whom God will not ſave? Or could all *Naamans* honour at home have healed his leproſie? Came not that from another friend? And thinke, what a ſad confuſion he had found it, if he had humored himſelfe in this diſtemper finally? Oh! as tickling as it was now, it had ſtung him after as a ſerpent! and ſo ſhall thine doe thee, if the Lord prevent it not for thee by counſell as he did for him, whereof in the next verſe (God willing) we ſhall treate more fully.

2. Branch. Try thy ſelfe how the defeating of Selfe worketh with thee.

And in a word, that which I would ſay in generall to all, is this; Try your ſelves well in your ſelfe-defeats, whether Satan mixe himſelfe with them to enflame corruption, and to make ſinne out of meaſure ſinfull; or whether they come onely from within our ſelves: If it be from Satan ſtirring up rebellion, then the ſpirit of Grace, may nevertheleſſe be at worke, and may prevaile thereby in time to caſt out Satan, and to ſubdue the ſoule to ſelfe-deniall and patient waiting: for why? The impreſſion is violent, and contrary to that ſpirit which guideth thee: Therefore thou ſhalt finde it yrkeſome to thee, unwelcome and wearieſome, thou wilt not harbour it, but reject it, and imbrace the defeats of Selfe, as *Paul* did, till the Lord ſatisfie thy deſires. But if thou feele that this diſcontent proceed from meere corruption; then know, that God calls thee to ſo much the more abhorring of thine owne way and will, and to ſay, alas! what is the ſalvation of a poore worme, a gnat, to that infinite glory which God ſeekes to himſelfe in his owne holy way? What if I loſe heaven in mine owne way, ſo I may have it in his way, yea any way? Yea ſhe ſhall wiſh ſhe had *Pauls* ſtrength to become Anathema, ſo that Gods wiſdome might be exalted? I ſay thou hadſt need entreat the Lord ſo farre to reveale unto thee the holineſſe, the equity of his wiſe way, that in reſpect thereof, thou maiſt ſtinke in thine owne noſtrills: Oh doe ſo! chuſe to goe to heaven with the forfeit of thine owne deareſt eies, hands and feet, rather then goe to hell, (for ſo would Selfe) with them: Say thus, I would waſh ſeventy ſeven times in thy Jorden, to croſſe my ſelfe, Lord, rather then turne from waſhing ſeven times to croſſe thy command. I would with *Paul*, attaine to the reſurrection of the dead by any means whatſoever, rather then faile of it, through good report and bad, through as many diſaſters as *Paul* choſe to paſſe, rather then he would not fulfill his Apoſtleſhip, would I chuſe to goe, rather then loſe my deſire, through poverty, loſſe of friends, ſhipwracke, perſecutions, hunger, ſtoning, nakedneſſe, yea Self and all, though defeated of her hopes. And ſo much ſhall ſuffice for this verſe, uſe, doctrine and time. Let us pray, &c.

Note well.

Phil. 3.

Matth. 18.8.

THE

THE TENTH LECTVRE upon the thirteenth Verſe following.

VERSE XIII.

And his ſervants came neere, and ſaid unto him, Father, if the Prophet had bidden thee doe ſome great thing, wouldeſt not thou have done it? How much more then, when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh and be clean?

VERSE 14. *Then he went downe to Iorden, and dipped himſelfe ſeven times, &c.*

2 Kings

Tranſition to the 13. verſe.

YOU may remember (beloved) that in our entrance upon this Scripture, we devided it into foure parts. *Eliſha's* meſſage, *Naamans* entertainment of it, The ſervants attempt, And the iſſue thereof, both immediate & conſequent. Two of theſe are already finiſhed through Gods providence. The other two remaine. At this time therefore by the ſame aſſiſtance, I am to proceed to the third generall, *viz.* The attempt of the ſervants of *Naaman* (for theſe the Lord choſe to uſe for the rectifying and reſtoring of their diſtempered Maſter, rather then the Prophet, through the prejudice of *Naaman*) and how the Lord inſpired them with wiſdome to give an onſet, (at this dead lift) upon their Maſter, to diſſwade him from doing that which he raſhly purpoſed, to wit, to depart without his cure: And this attempt of theirs, is ſet before our eies in this thirteenth verſe; wherein two generalls are to be noted. Firſt, how this verſe hangs upon the former: Secondly, the ſubſtance of matter contained in it. For the former, I paſſe it by till I enter upon it preſently: For the latter it conſiſts in three points. Firſt, we have the perſons attempting, the ſervants of *Naaman*. Secondly, the attempt it ſelfe. Thirdly, the inducements which they uſe to perſwade him. In the perſons, obſerve two things. Firſt, the relative duty, wherein each is bound to other, I meane they to him, and he to them. Secondly, their wiſe and religious carriage towards him as one out of the way, and that in three things: Firſt, in their reverence: Secondly, their mercy and

The method and parts of it two.
1. The coherence.
2. The matter in 3. things.

2 Kings

and tenderneſſe: Thirdly, thir ſeaſonableneſſe: The attempt it ſelfe followeth; wherein (with their adviſing him to obey) they ſecretly taxe his ſelfe-love: The third generall containes the inducements whereby they perſwade; as firſt, the eaſineſſe to obey; the ſecond, from his love and reſpect to the Prophet; the third, from the Prophets integrity; the fourth, from compariſon of the greater to the leſſe. All the which points, what they containe in them, we ſhall (God willing) as they come to hand, propound, open and enlarge, ſo farre as our weakneſſe through his grace ſhall permit us.

1. Point of coherence handled.

Not to repeat any thing then of former things, let us come to the firſt of the two generalls, that is the coherence: In which two particulars are contained. The former is, how different *Naamans* caſe is in this verſe from that wherein the former preſents him to us. The point will better ariſe when we have opened it, as the text affords it: For hitherto, (& eſpecially in the two verſes before) we have ſeen *Naaman* very unhappy in his proceeding: Firſt, in his wrong aſſaying of the King of Iſrael: Secondly, in his bootleſſe attendance at the doore of *Eliſha*: Thirdly, In his rejecting the meſſage, wherein both the way and the ſucceſſe of his cure was tendred unto him. In ſpeciall we have ſeene the prejudice of his owne heart preventing all taſte and liking of the meſſage: Then we have ſeene his carnall ſhifts wherein he hath taken pleaſure, for the confirming of himſelfe in his error: Laſtly, we have ſeene him fall to play the foole and mad man, wallowing in his bloud, and foaming out his owne ſhame, in pride and rage. All which laid together, preſent unto us a man wholly wedded to himſelfe, and foole-hardy to get out of thoſe armes of mercy which had offered themſelves to him for better ends then he would acknowledge; fighting and ſtruggling againſt that good which yet himſelfe pretended to ſeeke: And now who is there (that lookes with no other then a mans eie) beholding *Naaman* in this pickle and miſery, but would be ready to paſſe ſentence upon him and give him as gone? who is there, that ſeeing one deadly ſicke, tumbling in his bed without eaſe, and throwing the potion in the Phyſitians face, or againſt the walles, would not ſay, this man is but a dead man, he is paſt cure? Even ſo is it here with *Naaman*: If God were as man, or as willing to turne away in a rage from man, as man is from God, how ſhould he chuſe but periſh? But here is the wonder: *Naamans* cavilling againſt mercy, provokes mercy to ſo much the more pitty; his winding and wreſtling with Gods armes to get out, drawes theſe armes cloſer together to encloſe him in them.

Opening of the point.

If God were as man then were man forlorne.

And now between cup and lip, in this narrow necke of deſpaire, mercy comes in, and diſputes for him who diſputed againſt it ſelfe, ſaying, poore wretch! whither wouldeſt thou goe from this mercy offered thee? I ſee better then thou, that to yeeld to thy will were to leave thee to ſorrow: but when all is done, mercy muſt heale thee, and therefore call thy ſelfe to better conſideration: Let all thy rebellions become as ſo many ſhamings and tamings of thee for thy folly, humble thy ſelfe ſo much the more deeply, by how much the more thou haſt diſguiſed thy ſelfe, and let thy ſinne be thy ſorrow! Lo here, I reach out cords unto thee of perſwaſion made of many twiſts, the counſell of thy ſervants

about

about thee, whom I have made wiſer then thy ſelfe, that thou mighteſt come a little lower in thine own ſight, and at laſt become a fool that thou mighteſt be wiſe: And to conclude, I have put ſtrength into their counſell, and perſwaſion into their arguments, and authority into their obedience: Lay hold therefore of this my ſtrength, make peace, and recover health and cure of ſoule and body, from the diſeaſe of the one, and diſtemper of the other, and goe to Jorden, waſh and be cleane: This mercifull aſſiſtance the Lord through this verſe holds forth to *Naaman*: And what comes all this unto? Surely to this iſſue, That looke whom the Lord hath once caſt love upon, according to his good pleaſure, and the purpoſe of calling home; the ſame Lord will ſo faſten upon and hold cloſe to himſelfe, (whatſoever outward diſcouragements, inward oppoſitions and reſiſtances come in the way to hinder it) till by the irreſiſtible might of his power, he have brought them on ſhore, paſt all danger.

1. *Doct.* Whom God hath graciouſly prevented, he will alſo aſſiſt powerfully to proceed.

Let the firſt point then be this, whom God hath begunne with in preventing grace, he will proceed with by aſſiſting grace, till the worke of grace be perfected. Let us ſee ſome texts and ſome reaſons of it, and ſo come to the uſe. Firſt for reaſons, in a word, the maine is, that God knoweth who are his by their names: And hee will not loſe his owne worke; he will adde to that which he hath done, rather then undoe it by detracting from it: All his workes are perfect, hee leaves nothing by halfes, that were to diſhonour himſelf: Goe no further then *Naamans* example here, God had already prevented him, and brought him fairely towards both cure and converſion: Now if he had left him in the briars of his owne difficulties, and ſuffered the prevention to come to nothing, what a croſſing ſhould this have beene to his ends? He who prevents that he might aſſiſt, will not faile of his purpoſe. *Moſes* tells the Lord, that if he ceaſed now to goe with his people, the heathens would blaſpheme his name, and ſay, It was becauſe he could not bring him through the vaſt wilderneſſe, and ſo the glory of his prevention had been loſt: God then having foreknowledge, power, wiſdome and faithfulneſſe enough to ſerve his own glorious ends, how abſurd were it to think, that any thing could croſſe them, either from without or from within? no enemy, no danger, ſhall hinder the aſſiſtance of grace from that ſoule which hath beene prevented once thereby: Other reaſons will appeare in the anſwer of a queſtion by and by.

Deut. 9. 28.

Briefly then for Scriptures. Compare firſt, Exod. 5. 21. with 6. 1. The Lord meant the deliverance of Iſrael both outward and ſpirituall, by the hand of *Moſes*: He had already and long prevented them by the glad tidings thereof, and the expectation of it: But ſo it fell out, that in the attempt thereof, matters went very croſſe and awry, as appeares by the text, for notwithſtanding the oft aſſayes of *Pharaoh*, yet he held them off with delayes; and the plagues being ſtaid, the bondage continued, his heart hardned more, and he would not let them goe: Nay more, thoſe very inſtruments in whom (next to God) their confidence was, *Moſes* and *Aaron*, rather occaſioned their greater miſery, inſomuch that that the people thought it had beene better if the onſet had never beene made: Now when they ſaw this, the Elders come to *Moſes*, ſaying,

Proofes of the Doctrine. Exod. 5. 21. and 12. 31.

2Kings

God be judge betweene us and you (*q.d.* we pray God there be plaine dealing among you) for you have made us ſtinke in the ſight of *Pharaoh*, all goes worſe and worſe through your mediation: who would have liked this contrariety? Yet the Lord (who could exalt himſelfe above all theſe lets, and over *Pharaoh* himſelfe) wrought to his people a deliverance even from hence; and that which this tyrant would not permit willingly to be done, lo, the Lord by forcible breaking in upon him, doth compell him to, and in the way of ſaving Iſrael from him, overthrowes himſelfe.

Exod.5.20.21.

See Joh.9. When the Lord Jeſus had once prevented that poore blinde creature with love, and the handſell of his cure, preſently (in ſtead of good ſucceſſe) all falls out very foule; for why? The Phariſees (to ſtoppe the glory of it) ſwarme like hornets about this poore man, diſquieting him with queſtions, and ſnaring him with their malice, till at laſt, for his loyall Apology for Chriſt, they had caſt him out by excommunication. This might ſeeme an hard gobbet for ſo weake a ſtomacke to digeſt, and rather a meane quite to diſcourage him: But could all their railing upon him and Chriſt, alienation of him from Chriſt, eſtrangednesſe of parents, doe it? No, as poore as that ſeed was in him, yet lively it was, and held out forcibly againſt all enemies, valiantly defending Chriſts honour and innocency, till when the time came, that the Lord Jeſus ſaw good to ſtrike up the bargaine, a few words ſerved the turne; and in the meane while, no diſcouragements could beat him off, all wrought him cloſer and faſter to Chriſt, by that ſecret and hidden attendance of the Spirit upon the poore entrance which had beene begunne: All ſhall tend from the firſt to the laſt) to their good whom God loveth; not onely in ſanctification, but in vocation alſo, both being ſubordinate to election, though the former under a ſtronger promiſe. Who alſo (thirdly, could have thought, that *Paul* had beene neare his converſion, when he breathed out threats againſt the Saints (like a Lion) at his noſtrills? Yet that could not keepe off Gods preventing mercy from caſting him downe and taming him; and being ſo caſt downe, and a breach made, let the Lord ſlacken his worke? Did he not aſſiſt it ſtrongly? When this poore priſoner (inſtead of purſuant) lay blinde and deſolate, yea when all were affraid to meddle with him (as thinking the Lion to be couchant for a skill, that he might be rampant after) how doth the Lord breake through all difficulties, and ſends *Ananas* to open the eies both of his body and ſoule, and make him a ſound man! And thus here this poore *Naaman* (in ſhew) further from cure then at firſt; how doth the Lord ſtrangely turne the winde out of the Eaſt of a diſtemper, into the South of a calme? Cauſing here poore ſervants to become prevalent with their Lord, to yeeld to that which he had renounced? Surely ſo it is, the Lord can on the ſuddaine cauſe deliverance to appear (as recovery out of a long quartaine ague) even when all hope is paſt; when doome is given of ſhipwracke, Act.27. God ſhall make *Paul* to ſtand up with a word of hope to poore wretches; he can haſten ſalvation with wings (when it ſeemes a farre off) when miſery is at the deepeſt, then comes up the ſeed of light which was ſowne for the righteous: As when there is no ſtrength to bring forth, the Lord (unlooked for) enlarges

Joh.9.5.35. 36.

Rom.8.

Act.9.1.6.7. 8 &c.

larges birth for the fruit that is to come to the birth; and as the tender nurſe overcomes the poore froward child with love and mildneſſe till ſhe have brought it out of it humors: ſo here: the doctrine then ſtands firme upon her bottome. 2 Kings Eſay 38.

If any here aske, how and which way the Lord goes to work in ſuch a buſineſſe? *Queſt.*

I anſwer, by accommodating himſelfe in ſpeciall to the condition of ſuch a ſoule as doth ſticke thus in the birth, and ſtaggers between Gods preventing and perfiting grace. I ſay, his aſſiſtance is alway according to the ſoules difficulty: Here in this caſe of *Naaman* we may clearly ſee how he ſteppes in by the ſervants, furniſhing them with more underſtanding of his caſe, and inabling them to ponder the ſame with the ſad effects of it, more then *Naaman* himſelfe, and hereby kindling in them a ſparkle of divine counſell, which enabled them to ſpeake wiſely, feelingly, pertinently, and in due ſeaſon according to his condition, with ſpeciall bleſſing ſucceeding the ſame, and carrying it home to their Maſters ſpirit: how eaſily had the thing fallen out otherwiſe in every of theſe, had not God aſſiſted him? By theſe inſtruments, the Lord firſt ſtopped the precipitate minde of *Naaman*, from ſo ſuddaine a departure; weakened his ſtrong conceit, overthrew his carnall cavill, abated his pride, cooled his rage, enlarged the promiſe, the eaſineſſe, the probableneſſe, yea the divineneſſe and certainty thereof, till having beaten downe his high thoughts, he is made a low valley, and prepared for cure and converſion. So in like manner doth the Lord worke in any ſoule which needs his ſeconding aſſiſtance towards the enjoying of ſalvation: he will not ſuffer them to want any helpe which may further them. For example, Doth the Lord ſee their diſcouragements to come from others? He will arme them with ſtrong courage of reſiſtance and reſolution, as Joh. 9. Are they miſcarried with ſtrong error againſt the way of the promiſe? The Lord will ſend them counſell from heaven to rectifie and ſettle them: Are they held under great infirmity and crazineſſe of ſpirit, not daring to beleeve? The Lord will not breake the reed that is already bruſed, nor quench the ſmoking flax: Are they prejudicate againſt the Miniſter? God will bring forth his light, (as here he did *Eliſha's*) and imbreed an holy opinion of him: Doe friends oppoſe and become enemies? God will turne them to friends and furtherers againe: Are they froward and diſtempered in ſpirit, ſo that they are as troubled waters and cannot ſee light of truth, or make ſo much haſte that they cannot waite? The Lord will ſweeten and moderate their ſpirits with meekeneſſe, and forbearance: Are their corruptions ſtrong? The Lord will beate them downe before them: Briefly, be their lack and ayle whatſoever it can be, God will ſupply it, he will enlighten, ſuſtaine, perſwade, enlarge, prepare them for his worke, both by caſting out that which is contrary, and by encouraging that which is weakly begunne, till the worke be finiſhed. If he meane that the buſineſſe ſhall be depending longer, then the lets ſhall be ſmaller and more tolerable; if the objections and oppoſitions be more forcible, hee will ſhorten the ſeaſon, and haſten his worke: His aſſiſtance ſhall be ſufficient, till judgement breake forth into victory. Note.

Anſw. Aſſiſtance of grace wherein it ſtands.

Inſtances.
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

2Kings

Queſt.

Anſw. God hath ſpeciall reaſon to delay his worke.

Onely here may be a queſtion, why the Lord ſuffers ſuch ſtops, ignorances, weakneſſes, feares and diſcouragements to abide in his poore ſervants ſo long, and yet lets them alone, when he might remove them ſooner?

I anſwer, The time is not yet come, he will doe it, after he hath well diſciplined and yoked them to his owne way, humbled them in the particular inſight into their owne corruption, baſeneſſe, and inſufficiency of themſelves; and cauſed his power (all that while) to appeare to them, which at the firſt could not ſo have appeared, if he had prevented all ſuch trouble at once. But there is a time preſent, for Gods ſufficient grace to ſtay them from revolts and extremities; and there is a time to come for Gods perfiting grace to ſet them free; then ſhall they looke backe and ſee reaſon in all this way of God. See Joh.13.9.10. When *Peter* was averſe to Chriſt, in the offer of waſhing, our Saviour tells him, What I doe now thou knoweſt not, but hereafter thou ſhalt, 2 Cor. 12. A ſecret hand ſhall uphold thee the whileſt, but after ſhall diſcover the reaſon of all. Now I come to ſome uſe briefly.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction. 1. Branch. Aſſiſting grace of God, the roote of manifold priviledges to a beleever.

This firſt, inſtructs Gods deare ſervants about the precioufneſſe of their priviledges, and that in two reſpects. Firſt, it teacheth them what oddes there is betweene ſuch as the Lord hath honoured with the grace of vocation above others. Doth the Lord thus apply himſelfe to ſuch as are out of his covenant? Doth he ſo prevent them at firſt, or doth hee after ſo follow them up and downe, as the nurſes eie attends the feeble Infant, for feare of ſhrewd turnes? When their rebellious ſpirits cavill, winde out of his armes, and roll backe to their dungeon, doth he clapſe them more ſtrongly? Doth he take it to concerne him to doe ſo for his honour? No ſurely, and yet (as the caſe ſtands with them) he knowes they muſt ſinke, except he pitty them. But he is free and bound to none, ſave to whom he bindes himſelfe; therefore he ſpeakes to the one and to the other very differently: To his owne that golden promiſe belongs, The Lord will dry up Euphrates to make a way for his ſcattered ones; (ſome thinke it concernes the returne of the Jewes miraculouſly, as once through the red ſea:) But to the other, that fearefull ſpeech, There ſhall be a line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little: Why? That they may turn back, ſpue, fall, and riſe no more: Bleſſings he meanes, ſhall turne curſes to enemies to condemne them: But croſſes and offences ſhall turne releaſes and eaſes to the other: Oh! fearefull is the ſtate then of the one, happy of the other! Well might it be ſaid, Luke 4. of *Naaman*, There were many lepers in the dayes of *Eliſha*; but onely *Naaman* to whom he was ſo ſent: As *Lyſias* told *Paul*, he was faine to buy the liberty of a Citizen of Rome with a great ſumme, which *Paul* was borne too for nothing! Tell it thy ſoule in ſecret, how few have I ſeene God compaſſionate and ſhew a tender heart unto, when they have fought againſt mercy? How hath he ſuffered them to roll to their dunghill? His eie hath not pittied them; but he hath ſaid, He that formed them will ſhew them no mercy, let the wilfull be more wilfull, and the caviller fulfill his meaſure, let the carnall have is owne way, ſtumble and fall (and riſe no more) at the ſtumbling blocks of his owne iniquity! If he will needs depart let him goe! Joh. 6. Did our Saviour pull thoſe time-

Eſay 28.

Rev. ult.

Ezek.14.

time-ſervers (which followed him for the loaves) backe againe when they revolted and pickt a quarrell with him? No ſurely, he let them go. But to his Diſciples he ſaid, Will ye alſo go? He was loath to part with them.

Oh! what ſhould more prevaile to affect the hearts of al Gods people, who have met with aſſiſting grace then this experience? Hath hee dealt ſo with all ſorts as with you? As *Moſes* preſſed the children of thoſe Iſraelites that ſurvived their fathers, Did ever God ſo ſpeake to man, as he hath to you, and yet lived? So ſay I, Doth God no more for you, then for all ſorts? Then account him but a God in common: But hath hee, even when you have beene at laſt caſt, ſuddenly cauſed light to appeare, turned the low wheele uppermoſt, brought light out of darkeneſſe, and ſpread a table in a dry barren land? This he hath not done for all: If you have found the winde thus ſuddenly to turne, Oh acknowledge it! What if it had not beene ſo? If God had not beene ſo on your ſide? Surely the floods had prevailed and drowned you: If he have made thoſe waters walls to you, which have beene gulfes to others, is it no more then he ought you? Or did you wade out of your owne ſtrength? Did your owne hand ſuſtaine you? Will yee play the Pelagians now in this kinde, and aſcribe this eſcape to the lot of your better judgement, honeſty, labour and prevention, then others? Is there roome for ſuch ſcurſe here? Or may free will preſume to bee named the ſame day with the aſſiſting grace of God? Thoſe innumerable difficulties and dangers of ſhipwracke which thou haſt avoided, could thy owne wiſdome and will ſhunne them? No, let thy ſoule breake out into admiration at this freedome of mercy now, as at firſt, and confeſſe, Not to me Lord, but to thy ſelfe give the glory! Thou haſt done it for thy name, and to get thee glory, elſe it had beene undone for ever! they and I were digged out of one rocke, and their prerogative was as great as mine: Who am I that thou ſhouldeſt reveale thy ſelfe to me, and not to the world? That which put the difference, was the grace that ſeparated us, being all of one rocke, of one maſſe

Deut. 4. 33.

Pſal. 123. 3.

Eſay 63. 3.

And ſecondly, it ſhould inſtruct Gods owne ſervants to gather experience from hence, for all their life. Is there ſuch a golden firme chaine betweene one part of vocation and another? Is aſſiſting grace ſo tied to preventing, and perfecting grace to both, that nothing can ſever them? How much more then is ſanctifying grace tyed to the grace of calling? Tell me then (poore ſoule) hath the Lord done ſo great a favour as to make thee one of his own, inſpite of Selfe, Satan and the world, to redeeme, reconcile and juſtifie thee, to count thee his beloved, his ſecret one? Could nothing keepe thee from vocation and faith? What then ſhall ſtoppe thee from heaven and life, from perſeverance, and perfecting thy holineſſe in the feare of God? Thinke with thy ſelfe, is this a leſſe priviledge then the former? Are all that are Gods people partakers of this grace? Are they preſerved by the power of faith to ſalvation without ſnares, wounds, and breach of their peace? is this ſo common and thankeleſſe a favour, to be carried (as the Arke above mountaines) ſo above the floods of great waters, that they ſhould not come neare us? Behold the Saints in Scripture, how few eſcaped

2. Branch. Aſſiſting grace following prevention, is a bottome of ſound experience to a poore ſoule. See Rom. 5. 10.

Gen. 7. Pſal. 32. 5. 6.

2 Kings

eſcaped the trialls of their ſincerity in a ſafe manner? How many of them loſt their peace, waſted their conſcience, by drunkenneſſe, uncleanneſſe, intemperate paſſions, pride, the world, diſguiſed, and at laſt comming to their grave with ſorrow? Witneſſe *David*, *Salomon*, *Aſa*, *Hezekia*, *Ionah*, *Peter*, others? Behold the times in which we live: Doe wee finde it ſo common a grace, that thoſe (whom we have eſteemed of well for uprightneſſe, and zeale to the Goſpel) ſtill hold their beauty? Doe they not begiune to change colour, and wax pale and wanne? Doe they not ſtagger, temporize, and grow common in their communion with all ſorts, in their affections to the truth, to the power of godlineſſe? Is it not hard to finde one who may be truſted? Oh then! if God have kept thee cloſe from the error of the wicked, that thou mighteſt not be pulled from thy ſtedfaſtneſſe, nor wanze in thy firſt love, count it a peculiar, unſpeakeable mercy!

Againe, doſt thou ſee the moſt profeſſors to keepe from revolts? Is not the world full of offences of ſuch as gave their names to Chriſt? Whence then are ſo frequent ſcandales of ſuch as are fallen to uncleanneſſe in all corners, and ſo to other reproachfull ſins? Art not thou one of them? Hath the Lord hitherto holpen thee as *Samuel* ſaith? Bleſſe him and wonder: Oh Lord! thou who gaveſt *Paul* the lives of all that were in the ſhip with him, and (notwithſtanding all tempeſts and fears of ſhipwrack) broughteſt them all ſafe to land! Thou haſt graciouſly given my ſoule to the Lord Jeſus, put me into his ſhip, kept me hitherto from ſinking, & being caſt away upon the rocks, ſands & ſhelfes of this wofull ſea, in which I am toſſed: Even ſo (O Father) becauſe thou haſt promiſed, elſe I had beene caſt away a thouſand times, by temptation, by offences, by my corruptions: But as nothing could intercept the Lord Jeſus till his worke was done; when they had beene on the toppe of the hill to throw
Eſay. him downe headlong, ſuddenly he paſſed through them without hurt, fire could not burne, water could not drowne him, Divell could not tempt to prevaile, nothing could hinder; but he paſſed through all reports, wrongs, perſecutions, feares, till he had fulfilled his courſe, roſe againe from death, and conquered it: And why? Hee walked under the banner of his fathers protection: Even ſo it hath pleaſed thee O Lord! to fence and fortifie my poore ſoule, that neither my deſertions, when I thought my ſelfe caſt off, and in deſpaire, (through unbeleefe) nor the dint of my afflictions, (when as yet the arrowes of God dipt in venome, ſtucke in me,) nor the malice of enemies, nor the fiery darts of Satan piercing me by my luſts, could ever wholly divorce me from thee: Oh! how many thouſands have fallen on my right hand, and as many on my left, ſince I beganne? Men of like age, birth and education, of better parts and endowments then I; and yet, mercy hath kept mee hitherto: nay *Naaman* was never ſo ſullen and froward with the Prophet and with Jorden, as I have beene wayward with God, ſometime weary of his croſſes, cavilling againſt his governement, both in generall and ſpeciall, ready to leave his worke, to renounce his Sabbaths, Sacraments, Promiſes and all, becauſe I could not ſee how God performed them to me! when I have beene oppreſſed with Selfe, and a dead, ſapleſſe and ſavourleſſe heart, ready to give the Lord and his trade quite

over

over; yet he hath revived me, and not ſuffered me to revolt quite from him by all theſe; ſtill by the power of poore faith he hath kept mee to ſalvation, he hath delivered, doth and will deliver me ſtill, if I can waite. Oh! wonder at this grace of his, and let the firſt linke of vocation, be a warrant to thee, that the linke of juſtification, ſanctification and redemption, ſhall never be broken, but he that brought thee through ſo many unlikelyhoods, to beleeve; can and will (now much more) bring thee through as great oppoſitions to perſevere: enjoy thy priviledge, ſtand at gaze, and boaſt onely of the Lord. Thus much for the uſe of inſtruction.

Vſe 2. Encouragement to all feeble and fearfull ones.

Laſtly, let this doctrine be an incouragement to all feeble and fearfull ſoules, who think they ſhall never wade out of their diſtruſt, ignorance of Gods way, their deepe pride, Selfe, rebellion and hypocriſie; they behold theſe corruptions (by which Satan holds poſſeſſion as by Forts and Bulwarks) as evident markes of their periſhing one day, and that they are ſo ſtrong, that they will maſter grace, and deprive them finally of hope. But poore ſoule! ſtay a while, doe not ſo hardly ſentence thy ſoule: Looke here upon a poore Pagan out of covenant, an alien from God, behold how freely God prevented him at firſt, when he ſought him not; how graciouſly he aſſiſted him, and that when he was paſt all ſenſe of it, deepe in the ſence of the contrary: One (I ſay) that had no promiſe, meerly an hangby to the viſible Church, (ſave that he was ſupported by an inviſible bounty of unſpeakeable goodneſſe) and yet lo, when he was at the ſaddeſt point, and the loweſt ebbe of diſpaire, ſuddenly (as if this were Gods ſeaſon to breake his heart, and to win him to himſelfe, all hope of good ſucceſſe being paſt) there appeares a change of his wretched condition, into an happy; ſecret mercy had firſt marked him out for God, and the ſame ſtill waited on him not ſuffering him to ſlippe away, and depart from welfare. Hath God done this in the green tree, and ſhall not he doe it in the dry? Haſt thou (O poore ſoule) either deeper diſtempers then *Naaman* had, or ſadder affronts then he, within or without? Canſt not thou take courage to thy ſelfe by a promiſe, when hee found mercy without one? What is it then that cauſeth thee to be ſo heavy? In the following points, I ſhall ſpeake further to thee, onely here let me ſay this, If thou canſt prove that God hath once ſavingly prevented thee (whereof upon the ninth verſe I have at large ſpoken) I can prove hee will not forſake thee, he will not loſe any one ſtroke of worke upon thee, but will aſſiſt it, and in time perfect it: Sure I am, thou canſt not feel thy ſpirit deader or further off then did *Naaman*, thou canſt not be further out of Gods precinct then he was; and yet the Lord beyond hope, turned all to as happy an iſſue, as the premiſes ſeemed uncomfortable.

Take thou like courage unto thy ſelfe. All thy unkindly affronts ſhall end well: when thou art weary of hearing, God ſhall revive thy ſpirit, ſo that thou ſhalt heare a voice behinde thee, ſaying, heare ſtill, thou ſhalt not be able for thy heart to give over the ordinances; thy ſullen heart ſhall not be permitted to prevaile in thee againſt the promiſe; do what thou canſt, ſome light or other ſhall appear to encourage thee, to caſt out thy prejudice, cavills, frowardnes, when others are left to themſelves to ſinke in

2 Kings

in their owne peeviſh rebellions thou ſhalt finde pitty; thy tender nurſe ſhall uſe all his wiſdome not againſt thee, but for thee, and ſhall not bee provoked to give thee over, as thou doſt him; thou ſhalt ſee it and bleſſe thoſe armes that comprehended thee, when thou couldeſt not containe thy ſelfe; thoſe feet that followed thee, thoſe hands that laid hold on thee, ſaying, returne O Shulamite, returne! whither wilt thou goe? Out of bleſſing into the warme Sunne? What boot will that bee to thee? What an occaſion of endleſſe repentance and regret will it bee to thee hereafter, to leave God in a tetch, to forſake cleare, evident, ſure mercies, upon a toy and conceit of thine owne, againſt the promiſe of him that cannot lye? Oh! conſider better of it, lay not the bottome of remedileſſe woe betimes! Thou ſhalt wiſh one day of the Sonne of man hereafter, and that it were with thee, as it hath beene, but then, the guilt of thy former contempt and ſullenneſſe ſhall be a thouſand witneſſes againſt thee! Thus the Lord ſhall even revive the ſpirit of *Naamans* ſervants, in thy ſpirit, to pull thee backe from the pit, and prepare thee for mercy.

A caution hereupon.

Onely beware thou yeeld not to thy temptations, but waite upon the word: Suffer not this grace of God in thee to be ſlighted, (as it is by hypocrites) or to be damped and eclipſed by wantonneſſe, wordlineſſe and baſe luſts (as it is by prophane wretches, for theſe will rankle in thee, and fret into thy bowels a as canker) and then feare not but other annoyances ſhall ceaſe in due time, and turne to a ſweet calme in thee, when ſuddenly the Lord Jeſus awaking out of his ſleepe ſhall rebuke them, as he did the ſtorme and waves which threatned the ſhip wherein he lay; for it is as poſſible that thoſe ſhould have overwhelmed him and his Diſciples, as theſe ſhall ovewhelme thee: perhaps thou conflicteſt with boylings of corruptions, and rebellings againſt the Law of faith and righteouſneſſe of the Lord Jeſus; but even theſe ſhall humble thee, & turn to great caſting of Self out of thee: perhaps thou art caſt upon ſame unwelcome croſſes, loſſes, ſickneſſe, feare of death (before thy peace be made:) be content, the Lord doth not try thee in vaine, they are to make ſure worke of thy heart, and to bring thee to a duer ſight of thy ſelfe, they are not to deſtroy thee, although thou maieſt thinke them ſent to diſcourage thee, God ſhall put more courage then ſo into thee, hee hath the power of death in his hand, and it ſhall not ſeize upon thee, till the worke of God in thee be paſt danger: The bed of thy ſorrow, and the racke of thy conſcience, and the clattering of thy bones, and thy loathing of dainty meates, and drawing neare to the grave, ſhall not hurt thee; for all ſhall end well, and turne thee from the pit; and when thou art convinced thereof, thy loathneſſe ſhall be turned to readineſſe; as *Peters* was, Joh. 13.9. and thou ſhalt ſay, Doe what thou wilt Lord, if for good, I am ready to ſtoope: perhaps thy owne parents, wife in boſome, beſt friends and companions turne enemies, looke eſtrangedly, lye at thee with threats, taunts, ſcornes, for thy caſting them off, and looking another way: But be quiet, the Lord ſhall teach thy fingers to fight, and thee to thinke that the more pretious, for which the Divell ſo blufters againſt thee; reſolve to beare what thou canſt, but ſurrender not thy hopes: perhaps when the Law hath laid thee open to the ſight of thine owne conſcience,

Job 33.

conſcience, buffeting thee with guilt and horrors exceedingly, thine eſtate ſeemes worſe and worſe, thy old liberty in a ſinfull courſe bubbles up within thee, tempting thee to ſhake off chaines, to returne to it again; but God ſhall teach thee to preferre his chaines to the Divells freedome. In a word, Satan will diſquiet thee with Atheiſticall thoughts againſt God, Providence, Scriptures, the threats, the promiſes, as if they were all but fables, (ſo the wicked world through error counts them) but in all this confuſion the Lord ſhall not leave thee, (and as I ſaid before) through this ſea (dried up,) he ſhall bring his ſcattered ones, rather then they ſhall periſh. All ſhall give place (be it never ſo oppoſite) rather then Gods worke ſhall be defeated. And ſo much for this point of coherence may ſerve.

Ground of ſecond point. Gods continuing ſtill to buffet and humble *Naaman*,

Another thing there is to be noted here, ere I come to the ſubſtance of the words: And that is, that this thirteenth verſe wholly aimes at a third buffeting and ſubduing of *Naamans* ſpirit to the obedience of Gods command: Twice already you have heard how the Lord croſſed him: once by the idle carriage of the King who rent his cloathes, when hee thought he would have healed him: Another time, when he waited at *Eliſha's* doore, for an anſwer of reall cure, without delay: We ſee theſe did but incenſe the froward ſpirit of *Naaman*, and ſet him on carping and cavilling; and not onely ſo, but upon a will and ſtomacke of his owne to turne away and give over all: Therefore to take downe his high lookes, and that the cure which now followed, might not light upon ſo rebellious a peece: Lo, the Lord tames him this third time, not by ſending *Eliſha* to ſhame him, but by ſetting him to ſchoole to his poore ſervants and underlings; ſuch as commonly were glad to be at his becke, Doe this and he doth it, goe and he goeth, come and he commeth. But lo, now the caſe is altered, the Lord ſo honours them, that rather hee is under their authority, they bid him come backe, and he commeth, they exhort him to goe to Jorden and he goeth, they bid him doe this, Waſh ſeven times, and he doth it, yea and he is a happier man by thus obeying then ever in all his dayes by commanding. We know, when a Parent will abaſe a proud ſonne, he will not vouchſafe to correct him himſelfe, but put him to his Oſtler or to his Groome to be chaſtened, and this takes downe the pride of his ſonne: So here: The Lord keepes *Eliſha* within doores, and ſets the ſervants of this great ſtout Champion, to take him to taske, ſo ordering it that they muſt be conquerors of him, who yet had got ſo many victories: Now they can charme and levell his ſpirit, more then any other, and now theſe poore fellowes of farre leſſe wit, policy and inſight, muſt yet be inſpired with more of Gods meaning then himſelfe, muſt be appointed as his teacher, to doe him better ſervice in this their ſuperiority, then ever they did before.

Opening of the ground farther.

And it ſeemes to me, that in theſe two reſpects the Lord would tame his ſpirits by his ſervants: the one this, That now he ſees them convinced of that myſtery of truth which lay hidden in the Prophets meſſage, and appeared not to himſelfe, he thinkes it high time to follow: The ſecond this, That now his ſtomacke is left without any abettors, his high ſpirit is left to it ſelfe, from the Prophet he had that he could have, and lo, now his ſervants turne abettors of the Prophet againſt him, turne

ſtrong

2Kings

ſtrong Counſellors againſt his rage and carnall diſtempers: not one now of all his retinue that ſticks to him, or humor him; now he is in a ſtrait, in a ſtrange place, he is like to goe home uncured alone, if he will needs goe, for not the pooreſt page of his company dare carry him home a leper, all offer their beſt ſervice to Jorden for a cure, all are for God, and for the end of providence, ſway'd as one man to the obedience of the charge, not one offers his attendance to Aram: The ſpeech is, woe to him that is alone; but here it is contrary, happy is he who is left alone; miſerable while he was abetted, happy being forſaken: For why? Now there is no remedy but Jorden, all cry that way; now hee is in a ſtrait, now ſervants and all are for it, what ſhould he thinke but the finger of God is in it to perſwade? hee can but venture to try, there he may have helpe, at home there is none, what then ſhould he now do but try? Oh! what a turning of the ſtreame beginnes here to be? What a venture is now made upon this ſo long cavilled and ſcorned Jorden? And with the entring of theſe thoughts, lo, more and more light entreth, ſo that at laſt he obeyeth. Out of both theſe paſſages (brethren) let me note ſomewhat, and that but briefly; and I will no longer hold you from the ſubſtance of the words themſelves.

Eccleſ.8.

Doctrine. The grace of inferiours, a great helpe to ſuperiours. Joh. 13.

From the former of theſe two, I note this, that when light and underſtanding is wrought in the inferiour, it is a great convincement to the ſuperiour to follow: As the ſuperiours eminency ſometimes is a cracke to the pride of an inferior, as Chriſt ſtooping to waſh his Diſciples feete: Hath our Lord and Maſter denyed himſelfe ſo farre, and ſhall we bee prouder towards each other? So the judgement and wiſdome of an inferiour, is a checke to the conceitedneſſe of a ſuperiour: Surely I ſee, that even he whom I diſdained, is wiſer then my ſelfe; it is time for me to be a foole that I may be wiſer. Out of the mouth of babes and ſucklings hath he ordained praiſe, (ſaith the Pſalmiſt.) *Paul* in one place, Rom.11. 13.14. tells us, that he magnified his Apoſtleſhip among the Gentiles, that he might breed an emulation and ſhame in his Country-men, that they were ſo backeward. Saint *Peter* alſo tells the women, that he would have them ſubject to their rude and churliſh *Nabals*, that ſo their converſation might become convincing when God ſhould viſite them. Some indeed (as Saint *Jude* ſaith) are ſo baſe and perverſe, that they rather are moved to prich and diſdaine by their inferiours forwardneſſe, calling them haſtings, ſoone ripe, ſoone rotten, ragged colts make the better horſes; and calling their zeale, pride, boldneſſe, ſingularity: Much like that fooliſh Prophet *Balaam*, reproved by his Aſſe, which ſpyed the Angel of God ſtanding in his way, when he could not ſpy him himſelfe, and when ſhe daſht his foote againſt the wall by ſtarting, he ſmote her: But we ſee he is recorded as a notorious beaſt, (more brutiſh then the Aſſe) and therefore convinced by the Aſſe herſelfe. But where there is but a dram of ingenuity and humbleneſſe, the very thing it ſelf ſpeaketh. When a poore ſilly woman of the inferiour and weaker ſexe, ſhall ſee that in the Miniſtery which her husband ſees not, (who yet goes for a man of deeper underſtanding,) what a buffeting is it? When a poore ſervant of meane eſteeme, and belonging to ſome baſe office about the houſe, ſhall meet with the knowledge of Chriſt in the Goſpel, which

Amplification of the point.

Matth.21.16.

1 Pet.3.5.

2 Pet.2.16.

which the Maſter of the family wants, what an upbraiding and humbling it ought to be! Lo, ſuch a poore wretch hath that in him which I cannot reach, who yet ſhould be the fountaine wherefrom ſhould flow all wiſdome for the repleniſhing of the whole houſhold committed unto me: Oh how it troubles me! A poore child, a creeple, to have more in it for true gracious revealing, then all the fry of jolly children, how doth it convince them? God is in it of a truth! Alas! by this the Lord caſts down the high things of mans wiſdome when it ſees it hath no more, nay not ſo much as the baſeſt worme, and moſt contemptible of a thouſand: The great things, lofty and ſtately the Lord laughs to ſcorne by the ſilly and meane things: And then, where is the Scribe, and the wiſe man with all his depth? Sure it is meere ſhallowneſſe and folly! I have to this purpoſe ſpoken before: The ſluggard ſeeing that in an Ant which he wants, may be humbled.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction. Meane ſilly ones, if godly, are not contemptible.

Therefore in a word, let it ſpeake firſt, to the ſilly and ſimple, and tell them, if they were as they ſhould be, as baſe and deſpiſed as they deeme themſelves, God can cloath their uncomely parts with more honour, and cauſe them to be terrible to the proudeſt to convince and humble them. Small creatures as the Cocke is a terrible object to the Lion it ſelfe; nature having ſo curbed that mighty creature: Inferiours make themſelves deſpiſed, becauſe there is little in them to honour them, for if there were, it is not their meanneſſe could do it: Ah yee poore underlings in this aſſembly, here is a portion for you (for ye are of the family, and ſtewards muſt give each one his due) me thinkes I pitty you, to ſee how painfully ſome of ye drudge in the kitching, others in the field, others at your wheeles, in your ſhops, and meane occupations, with poore maintenance (God knowes) and leſſe countenance! I pitty you, ſerving men, who upon ſmall wages creepe into your Maſters houſes, glad of meane vayles: But alas! that which makes you ſuch pezants, and poore ſonnes of the earth, is not your outward quality, your poverty, your ſervice, your meane attire and ſordid worke, for all theſe are for God: Looke into the Scripture, and ye ſhall meet with poore things which yet carry their marke of honour upon them: That poore Prophets widow left in debt, the poore widow with her two mites, this poore wench in the beginning of this Chapter, a Captive and ſervant, poore *Oneſimus*, one good for nothing, good for all things after: Oh yee poor ſouls! your ſin makes your baſe outſide out of meaſure baſe, if that were clothed with honour, it would afford ſo much the more beauty and eſteem unto you in the eies of all men; none ſo much your betters, ſo much richer, learneder, nobler then you, but ſhould admire & be in love with you, if there were true humbleneſs, faith & grace in you! who reads the ſtory of poore *Rhode*, but muſt needs affect that cordiall love of the Saints in her, who (for joy could not open the doore to *Peter*, till ſhee had been the firſt meſſenger of his deliverance? Therefore (ye poore inferiors) take heart to your ſelves; think not thoſe only to be eſteemed with God who have greatneſſe to commend them to the world: No, no, the leſſer you have here to take to, the more covet that which may commend you truly and really in the ſight of all that can judge: Let none deſpiſe thee, poor ſoul! Thou wilt ſay it is not in thy power. I anſwer thee, ſeek to him

Matth. 12.

2 King. 4. 1. Marke 12. 43. verſe 3. Philem. 3. 4.

Act. 12. 13.

Tit. 2. 15.

2 Kings

him who (as *Hanna* ſaith) exalteth the lowly and meeke: while men behold the poore and proud, a drudge to the kitching, and to thy luſts, wonder not, if thou be as the off-ſcouring of all men; but aſſuredly, thy baſe outſide ſhould not diſgrace thee, if there lodged any goodneſſe, any ſpark of Gods image in thee. Truly (brethren) great rich men are too high for Religion, and baſe poor folke thinke themſelves under it: But if you would ſeeke for knowledge, humility and grace, you ſhould ſee whether it would not ſtoope to you: And you ſervants that are butlers to Gentlemen, or Stewards, nay Oſtlers and Bayliffes and Caters; you ſhould be honourable in the ſight of your Maſters, they ſhould equall themſelves with you, yea be glad of you, (whatſoever their authority be otherwiſe) if there appeared grace in you.

As Obadiah to Ahab, Joſeph to Pharaoh.

Vſe 2. Admonition. Superiours muſt turne their indignation at the grace of inferiours, into ſhame and emulation.

And againe to you ſuperiours, let me adde this: Goe not againſt the edge with God (like *Balaam*) when you ſee the Lord goes about to convince your folly and backewardneſſe: Smite not, threaten not the Aſſe whoſe mouth God opened to reprove you. Many of you husbands, parents and maſters, when once you perceive your wives, children and ſervants, to grow zealouſer then your ſelves, are ſo farre from countenancing and holy emulation, that rather you have them in continuall jealouſie, and hold them under ſo much the more: Their Religion muſt be ſure to bee their prejudice and incumbrance; they can the hardlier pleaſe you, you are the more prone to picke quarrells, you watch the time of croſſing them in their lawfull liberties, yea you joint them the more of their freedome for Gods worſhip within and without: what is this but to play the taske-maſters and to lye heavy upon them? So that, if God ſuſtained them not by his power, they ſhould fall off: And no doubt many are offended by ſuch meanes, but woe to ſuch by whom the offence commeth. Others there are who ſeeing Religion to have qualified their inferiours with faithfulneſſe, humility and peaceableneſſe, in marriage, in their buſineſſe and carriage; are glad to ſee the change, but why? Not joying in their grace and good examples, but becauſe you make benefit thereof for you owne behoofe and content, taking all ye can get out of them, but acknowledging no mercy from God, either to them, or to your ſelves in them: Nay perhaps ye ſlight them, quip and mocke them, Oh! theſe women muſt have their wills, or elſe we ſhall have no peace! and ſo the liberty they get, hey muſt have with unequall conditions: I doe not here ſpeak of the vileſt in this kinde, how rather many provoke themſelves to vexation, brawling, quarrelling and threatning of their inferiours, as thinking their forwardneſſe an inſperſion to their baſe backewardneſſe, and therefore they behold them with the eies of Kites whom they ſhould behold with Doves eies; they ſhorten their wives of allowance, give them diſcouraging affronts, they beat and miſuſe their ſervants, threaten their poore children to joynt them of this and that land or portion, for their Puritaniſme and forwardneſſe: And thoſe that goe not ſo farre, yet ſtill keepe at one ſtay, profit not by their inferiours, if they doe not diſdaine to learne of ſuch, (as moſt are hardened thereby) yet the beſt is, that they give them their courſe, and ſtill remaine, as baſe and barren as before.

Rom.11.13. Whereas, rather they ſhould be provoked to jealouſie by them: *Naaman*

man here did so: Doubtlesse the insight he saw his servants had, in the will of God (more then himself) did smite an holy awe and authority into his spirit! Doe these underlings see that which I cannot? What lets me from it? Surely some strong lust or humour blindefolds me! What a shame is this, that my retinue (whom the businesse concerns not) should perceive that which I cannot? Surely it furthered the convincement exceedingly: Oh! let us all in the feare of God be of his minde! Wee shall not need to subject our selves and debase our selves for the matter: But let us not blindefold our eies, that we should not behold the light shining in at the least crevis! We Ministers let us not disdaine the examples of private Christians, either in their zeale of obeying or suffering; but if we see secretly grace breaking forth from the poorest, in more then common wisdome, uprightnesse, closenesse to the truth; be so farre from snagging, and nipping of such, that rather we marke them for peculiar ones, and (although they know nothing) what hinders, why (even from such) we may not better our selves many waies? Was not *Apollo* glad to learne of *Aquila* a Tradesman? Act. 18. 26. But especially you private persons observing such inferiours as exceed your selves, doe not loutishly slight and put them off, but say I perceive if I hold my peace, the stones shall cry! truly these cry aloud in mine eares! me thinkes I consider, if such poore ones get such knowledge, what might not I get with paines? Truly, I will give the onset! I shall else never looke upon my poore child, but mine heart will throb and tell me, he shall rise up in judgement one day (against his will) and condemne me! when the Lord shall say, I sent a poore daughter of mine, to lye in thy bosome, to see if her zeale could any whit warme thee, but I see thou art cold as a stone still, and as dead as a blocke! I raised up out of thine owne loynes, a child or children to feare my name, that I might provoke thee by that meanes to jealousie, but I see nothing prevailes: Nay perhaps a poore drudge in thy kitching, or rubbing thy horses heels; such an one as thou mightest wonder at, how or whence he should come by any savour of Religion, and yet thou takest no notice of it, seekest not to me to droppe any mercy into thy soule, to breake and convert it! Oh! what a wofull *item* hast thou laid up, what an accusation hast thou put into Gods mouth against thee? Surely if such examples provoke not to thee jealousie of imitation; they shall occasion God to burne against thee with the jealousie of indignation! And so much for the coherence.

Now for the second branch of this coherence (the ground whereof I have already laid downe) that which I would say of it, is this, *viz.* That the Lord doth still thus follow *Naaman* with new affronts, that he might conquer his will and stout heart, which had taken courage to it selfe, and hardened it selfe in it owne way against God. I say, the Lord now intends a finall battery of it, by setting his servants (all of them with one consent) to side with God and the Prophet, none with him; which no doubt, was a great battering and stubbornesse. And it teaches us that this selfe-will of ours, is as desperate and tenacious an enemy as can bee in the matters of God, (worse then selfe-mindednesse and strength of opinion;) when one selfe-will comes to strengthen selfe-conceit, that it hardens it selfe against God, and will try masteries which shall carry the goale:

The second branch of the point. God will never lin with his till he have tamed their rebellion.

2 Kings goale: ſtrange it is, how invincible a fort it proves againſt him and all the way both of commands and promiſes: But marke, before that the Lord turne home the ſoule unto himſelf, he will by one means or other, (though it be by a continuall oppoſing of the ſame) ſo breake, pull down and levell this wofull rebellion of heart and will in the ſoule, that hee will let out the water and bloud of it, and ſhed the bowells of it to the ground, that it may never ariſe up any more to croſſe him: He will bring it ſo to the bent of his bow, that it ſhall ſay, Speake Lord, for thy ſervant heares: And with him, Act. 9. What (Lord) wilt thou have me to doe? And as I have noted already in the former affront of the meſſage, ſo now in this I note againe, The Lords Kingdome is not ſet up, nor his throne ſtabliſhed, ſave upon the ruines of ſelfe-will, which hath her Kingdome and Scepter (through Satan) ſet up, as altar againſt altar, contrary to this. *Naaman* now, immediately before his cure and converſion, muſt be the third time thus encountred both by the perſwaſions, and by the finger of God, in drawing of his ſervants to a contrary will to their Maſters; that ſo at laſt his oppoſite heart might fall down after all this encounter: wonder not at the reſolution of the wayward will of man againſt Gods; it is the very bloud, ſpirit & marrow of the ſoul, it is the fort which holds out longeſt againſt God; til the Lord batter that, there is no approach of grace: Will quailes and failes, as ſoone as the Lord enclines to doe the poore ſoule good; be it never ſo unpleaſing, ſeem it never ſo harſh, impoſſible; by head and by hand, the Lord will not be overcome by corruption: he will make it cry out, thou haſt overcome!

Vſe. And (good brethren, ſeeing I long to be in the verſe it ſelfe, and muſt be briefe.) take it thus: God will never leave thee whom he loves, till he have thus wonne the day of thee, and when he meanes truly to cure thee, and to make thee his Diſciple, even at the very ſame time, he will cauſe the way of thine owne will to ſtoope to his: He will blocke thee up quite, and famiſh thee, till he have made thee ſurrender.

Obiect. *Anſw.* Sanctification I doe not here urge, brethren, nor repenting before beleeving: But I ſay this, That baſe bent ſtreame, and our corrupt will, diſpoſition and inſtinct for that which pleaſes us, our eaſe, our profits, our pleaſures, or whatſoever lies in us, contrary to Gods way, either of ſalvation or government, the Lord will have caſt downe in us, ere ever hee betruſt us with grace; at leaſt, in the vouchſafing of grace, hee vouchſafes that: a moſt meeke ſubmiſſion of ſoule, a renouncing of that ſelfe-way, and ſelfe-will in us, which perpetually luſts againſt his Chriſt and obedience: the choice, the propenſity of the ſoule (which is the darling of all) the Lord will carry downe before him with a ſtronger ſtreame of his owne, and turne it backe not onely in point of reſiſtance, but in point of concurrence. Cardinall *Wolſey* is reported to have beene a man of ſo haughty a ſpirit, that his ſtile was wont to be [*Ego & Rex meus:*] As I and the King pleaſe. But God will admit no ſuch Peere, as our will, to quarter armes with him; he will have the ſtone of our heart broken and taken out, and an heart of fleſh put in: He will not have us doe according to that ſeemes good in our eies; Deut. 12. 8. and either in beleeving or obeying: It is not our flouriſhing about with duties (when we are pleaſed) that ſhall ſerve our turn: A woman pleaſes not her husband in all her buſie

Note well.

2 Cor. 10. 4.

Yet repentance goes not before faith.

buſie welcomming and feaſting of ſtrangers, but in the reſigning up of all her will to his: So we pleaſe not God in doing ſome of his will, but in having our owne will ſubdued to his, implanted in it, and abhorring to eſtabliſh our ſelves with him in the throne of Majeſty: He will ſhew us what favour he pleaſeth, or we could deſire; but ſtill (as *Pharaoh* ſaid to *Ioſeph*) I will be chiefe in the Kingdome, thou ſhalt be under in that. Gen. 41. 40.

To conclude therefore brethren, looke into this curſed will and ſtomacke of ours, both the roote and branches, how croſſe and contrary it hath ever beene to Gods, how it hath ever fallen upon and choſen the worſe way: conſider the deepneſſe of the purpoſes of it, how hidden, ſecret, cloſe, they have beene; weigh the dangerouſneſſe of them, that commonly they have beene moſt rebellious againſt thoſe waies of God (if any be weightier then other) which have moſt touched upon his prerogative, (as the matter of imbracing the maine promiſe, or the parting with ſome precious, perſonall beloved luſt:) alſo remember, how dead and rotten this will of ours hath alway been in contradiction, and walking contrary to God, Levit. 26. Inſomuch that after ſome ſeeming convincement, and vow of ſubjection, to Gods will in ſuch and ſuch caſes, yet when old occaſions and objects have offered themſelves, we have forgot our covenants, and are as ranke and rife in our ſelf-willedneſſe and ſtiffenecked neſſe as ever, and made a very cuſtome of it: I ſay in Gods fear, remember how it hath been, a dead rotten will and heart we have nouriſhed againſt the Lord: And therefore let theſe and this example here, breake this ſtaffe of pride and will in us, which hath hitherto borne ſway, and defiled both minde and members to the obedience thereof, as fearing to croſſe her; and let us at laſt bee confounded for it: If *Iob* were ſo, how much more need had wee? Chap. 42. 4. And ſeeing it hath ever miſled us, let us croſſe it, abhorre it, and give up our ſelves to the rule and authority of the Lord Jeſus: He is our ſole King who muſt rule, he will teach us to chuſe, will and affect, love, loath, feare, abhorre nothing but which ſhall be for our good: Be ruled by him and he will deſtroy *Athalia* the uſurper, and ſet up the true heire, and the land ſhall have reſt. Otherwiſe if we finally hold our owne againſt him, he will doe that in wrath, which he would have done in love, and have his will of us in hell, and ſuffering, who could not get it in obeying: For every one that contends with him in judgement, he ſhall moſt righteouſly condemne. And ſo much for the coherence. Now I come to the words themſelves of this thirteenth Verſe. Eſay 54. end.

You may remember (beloved) the Analyſe I gave you of the contents in this Verſe, and the order thereof.

Firſt, (as you know) I beganne with the attemptors, theſe ſervants of *Naaman*; in whom I conſidered, Firſt, that ſpeciall duty of loyall faithfulneſſe to their Maſters ſoule and body, and the welfare of both: This I call the duty they ſtood bound unto by vertue of their relation. Sutable whereto was his commendation in a due reſpect and tenderneſſe towards them, as a father towards children. Father (ſay they) if the Prophet, &c. The word I grant, is generally a tearme of reverence; howbeit here, the realneſſe of their faithfulneſſe, ſhews that there was more in it. They carried a filiall ſubjection towards him, as to a father of peculiar honor & ac- The firſt generall head of the verſe, the attemptors.

2Kings

Opening of this ground of the ſervants fidelity.

count with them: No children could have more faithfully demeaned themſelves to their naturall Parent, then theſe ſervants did to *Naaman*. For why? they obſerving the ſcope of their Maſters journey to bee weighty; an object of great expectation to their Maſter; and ſeeing him now through his diſtemper, to take a courſe contrary to his owne deſignes, yea thereby being ready to renounce the meanes of his welfare by a meere tetch, and pritch againſt the Prophet. What doe they? Moſt faithfully ſet themſelves to procure a redreſſe of this error, as foreſeeing it like to be ſad and remedileſſe, except prevented in time. And this they do with ſome earneſtneſſe, (ſeeing the caſe ſo to require) that is, they oppoſe him in his mood and humors, ſeeke to rectifie them, and breed a good opinion of the Prophet in him, that ſo he might obey the meſſage, recover the cure, and turne from his wilfull purpoſe of a wrathfull departure. This will better appeare, if we conceive that which ſome ſervants, yea the moſt, would have done in this caſe. Surely to demerit their Maſter, & to humour him in his baſe pangs, they would have come to him and ſaid, Here is a ſurly fellow indeed, a Prophet who ſent for our Maſter, and yet that ſcornes to ſpeake to him; lo, he hath ſent him a flim, flam, a tale of a tubbe: And what Nobleman of worth could brooke it? Come Maſter, let us ſcorne to attend upon him any longer, let us ſet ſpurres to our horſes and let him goe, let him keepe his cure to himſelfe. If they had ſaid ſo, they might ſurely have beene welcommer to a man of paſſion, then ſpeaking as they did. But the Lord (whoſe the work was) put more faithfull and wiſe thoughts into them then ſo, for the attaining of his ends. The point then is this, Servants muſt be loyall and faithfull to their Maſters, and procure their good both ſpirituall and outward, for conſcience ſake. I am now entring upon a point of morall nature, yet of ſpeciall uſe and importance, for the inſtruction of this condition of people; which ſeeing I am fallen upon (though beſides my ſcope of this text) yet I will labour to open unto you, as God ſhall give me grace; ere I come to thoſe other points more ſuting to my purpoſe.

Doctrine. Servants muſt be faithfull to their Maſters, both for body and ſoule.

Marke it then: The dutie of ſervants in ſpeciall is, faithfulneſſe to their governours of both ſexes, to whom they belong. Every ſervant ſhould count himſelf as an *Oneſimus* in name and deed to his *Philemon*, uſefull in all reſpects, but eſpecially in faithfulneſſe. That which once the Duke of Medina, generall to the King of Spaines his fleet againſt England in eighty eight, ſpake baſely, each ſervant ſhould ſpeake out of conſcience. For being asked by one what his meaning was to do with the Engliſh, in caſe he got the day, whether he would not ſpare the Catholicke party; he anſwered, he would neither ſpare one nor other, but make way for his Maſter: A ſpeech of a very wickedly faithfull ſervant: But a good ſervant muſt ſay ſo: I am for my Maſter, & that is my ſcope. So their Maſter fare well, though they have an ill word and have ſmall thanke (yea ſometime by himſelfe, for flatterers for a time finde more favour, then faithfull ones) yet they muſt ſtill bee faithfull. Reaſons and proofes are theſe.

Philem. 11.

1. *Reaſon.* To be truſted by our betters is honourable.

Firſt reaſon, It is an honourable thing to be a ſervant, and bee put in truſt by a Maſter, therefore he muſt be faithfull, elſe it were more ſlaviſh and treacherous. When *Ioſeph* was tempted to unfaithfulneſſe in a high

high degree, his argument of diſſwaſive (beſt he could uſe to an heathen) was, My Maſter met with me a ſtranger and boughr me, yet hath betruſted me with all he hath, he knoweth of nothing of all under mine hand; he hath forbidden me nothing ſave thee: and ſhall I play the traytor with him in this? No. The trade of a ſervant in each kind is a ſtewardſhip; no ſervant is ſo ſilly, but is or may be in caſe to bee truſted with more or leſſe that way: Now it is required of each ſteward that hee be faithfull; not that all ſervants are equally betruſted; yet none are ſo ill truſted, but if they deſpiſe conſcience, both the life and ſtate of their Maſter (more or leſſe) may lye at their curteſie. As one ſaid of a traitor, who ſo deſpiſeth his owne life may eaſily be Maſter of anothers. They are ſuppoſed faithfull, not ſuſpected: If they be falſe what may not they attempt? Chaſtity of wife, of daughter, welfare and ſafety of ſonne, wealth and eſtate of Maſter, name, credit, and content of all. And ſhould ſuch an one bee faithleſſe and not faithfull? No verily, except one maine ſinew of ſociety among men ſhould bee cut in ſunder. Some ſervants are (I grant) more intereſſed in their Maſters then others: Merchants Factors, Agents, Gentlemens ſtewards, and Auditors, Accomptants, ſome Prentices in the ſhoppe, have the truſt of their Maſters counting bookes, revenewes, receits, monies, and the greater the truſt, the more dangerous the unfaithfulneſſe: (As he who to provide for himſelfe, bids a debtor to his Maſter of an hundred pound, to ſet downe fifty, a ſpeedy way to undoe his Maſter.) But yet all ſervants have temptations enough to be unfaithfull: All therefore, as well one as other muſt be faithfull, yea write fidelity upon their fringes and borders, palmes and ſhoulders; as the high Prieſts Miter had [Holineſſe to the Lord.] This is the firſt reaſon, the honour of their condition requires it; God hath diſpoſed ſo, that it cannot be well otherwiſe.

2Kings

Gen.39.8.9.

1 Cor.3.2.

Luke 16.6.

The ſecond reaſon: Fidelity was required even of ſlaves, ſuch as thoſe ſervants were to whom *Paul* in his Epiſtles directs his exhortations, 1 Tim.6.1. and elſewhere. Such as knew no God, no Chriſt, meere heathens, bought and ſold as ſheepe in the Market; ſuch as (if they had beene ſlaine outright) could have beene in no worſe condition, then they were in; and therefore one might looke for nothing from, but deſperateneſſe: Now if theſe were ſo urged to faithfulneſſe, what ſhould ours doe, who are ingenuous, free, partakers of the ſame commodity? If they who had no encouragements; how much more we?

2. *Reaſon.*

Thirdly, Fidelity is the prime vertue of a ſervant; as ſubjection is of a wife, dutifulneſſe in a child, juſtice in a Magiſtrate, bounty in the rich, &c. All other properties in a ſervant, ſerve this one; gentleneſſe, skilfulneſſe, painfulneſſe, diſcretion, cheerfulneſſe, good carriage, ſtinke without faithfulneſſe. A good ſervant is digged out of the rocke of faithfulneſſe. If then this be the Cardinall vertue, how ſhould a ſervant faile of it, but his failing muſt be great? The light of the body is the eye, if then that be darke how great muſt that darkeneſſe be? If that which gives ſtrength to all the reſt be wanting, how ſhall they ſubſiſt?

3. *Reaſon.*

Mat.6. 22, 23.

Fourthly, (which is all in all) the moſt wiſe God, the authour of all ordinances, the God of order, and not of confuſion, hath ſo appointed it, that ſervants muſt be faithfull. It is he who hath made himſelf the rewarder

4. *Reaſon.* God ſtands countable to good ſervants.

2 Kings

warder of them, and ſtands betweene their Maſters and them for wages. If they ſerve Maſters who will conceale the labour and fidelity of their love; yet they have a better ſtring to their bow, for they ſerve the Lord Chriſt, and he will requite them to the uttermoſt.

5. *Reaſon.* Faithfulneſſe is the center whence all the graces of a ſervant are derived.

Laſtly, faithfulneſſe is the ſtaffe and ſpoke which ſtrengthens and inables the wheele of ſerviceableneſſe. As Chriſtian converſation is ſtrengthened with ſpeciall vertues ſupporting it, as faith and confidence in ſtraits, patience in croſſes, righteouſneſſe in earthly dealings, ſubjection in hearing the word; ſo in the ſpeciall relations of life, each one hath her ſupporting grace; among the reſt, faithfulneſſe is that vertue which affords life, and ſappe to each part of a ſervants employment. As then, the ſpokes or ſtaves cannot be wanting to the wheele, but of neceſſity the wheele will ſplit, and the motion thereof will be ſtopped: So faithfulneſſe cannot be wanting to a ſervant, but (of neceſſity) the whole round of ſerviceableneſſe muſt bee interrupted; which muſt needs inferre a marvellous detriment to the family, when ſo maine an inſtrument of the good and welfare thereof, (through whoſe hands ſo much of the affaires thereof muſt paſſe) is dilabled and perverted. So much for reaſons.

Proofes. Heb.3.5.

Scriptures for the proofe of it are many. When the holy Ghoſt doth but allude to ſervants, he alway alludes to faithfulneſſe, as their main vertue. *Moſes* is alway ſtiled the ſervant of the Lord, and therefore he is ſaid to be faithfull in all the houſe of God. When the Lord Jeſus brings in the Maſter reckning for the talents, he commends his ſervant thus, Well done good and faithfull ſervant, thou haſt beene faithfull in a little, &c. *Abimelec* being queſtioned about *David*, and the ſword which he gave him, anſwers *Saul*, And who is ſo faithfull among all the ſervants of *Saul* as *David*? So *Paul* to *Titus*, not purloyning, but ſhewing all good faithfulneſſe, that they may adorne the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. The point is not queſtioned; common experience giveth ſufficient proofe to it, and is as a thouſand witneſſes.

1 Sam. 14.22.

Tit 2.10.

Queſt.

The greateſt queſtion here will be, how this gift of faithfulneſſe may be purchaſed? All men cry out of the want of it, and therefore it muſt be a ſpeciall principle which muſt infuſe it.

Anſw. 1. Servants can bee well bred only in the houſe of Chriſt.

I anſwer therefore, as it is in all other relations, Religion muſt be the firſt ſhaper of the wife to be ſubject, the child to be dutifull, ſo it muſt alſo faſhion and mould the ſervant to be faithfull. We uſe to covet ſervants for their good breed; a ſervant well bred and brought up under ſuch a choice governour, or Miſtreſſe, taught and trayned to obedience, and diligence, is much deſired. But indeed the Lord Jeſus, that great Lord of all the families of the earth (who yet himſelfe was a ſervant to his father, and faithfull as a ſonne in all his houſe, and in this forme of a ſervant obeyed, yea denyed himſelfe to the death, to give his father content) muſt be the ſhaper of all faithfull ſervants. Some baſtard colours a ſervant may get, by obſervation, by trayning, by experience of the world; but theſe colours will waſh off eaſily with weather, when either peculiar temptations of Satan, paſſions of his owne, provocations by the Maſter be offered: A morall ſervant is better then a rude and unbroken one, but he will laſt no longer then his principle laſteth; he will be faithfull, except it be very much for his ends to be otherwiſe, but no longer.

Phil.3.7.

longer. Then he may prove a filcher, a theefe, a fugitive, then unfaithfull to Maſters buſineſſe, wife, children, name and honour. Except there be a barre put in the way to ſtoppe all theſe as occaſion may ſerve, a ſervant will leape over all theſe bounds. And hence it is, that we ſay thus of many ſervants which breake out on the ſuddaine, ſome to uncleanneſſe with fellow ſervants, diſhonouring the family, others to intemperance, others to ſtealth and abandoning their Maſters: Oh! I never ſaw the the leaſt fault in him, he was ſo diligent, gentle, painfull and faithfull, that I never ſuſpected him, leſſe nor more: Alas! he was too ſubtill for you, he was ſo while he ſaw his time and vantage: But becauſe theſe colours were never laid in a good ground and in oile, therefore they waſhed off. There muſt be a ſuperiour principle which muſt cauſe faithfulneſſe. The element of ſervice, the Maſters worke cannot teach it: Servants muſt goe out of Chriſts Schoole: a true ſervant of Chriſt, faithfull to him, out of love for love, for reconciliation, for pardon, for peace, for grace, will be faithfull for his ſake to a Maſter, (be he good, be he bad) why? Becauſe the maine fidelity of heart to God, will firſt bind him to the Lord Jeſus in what charge ſoever he betruſt him: As if the Lord Jeſus ſay to a Miniſter, I have loved thee, made thee faithfull, and put thee into my ſervice, I now will have thee declare thy faithfulneſſe to me in feeding my ſheepe and lambes. A Miniſter will doe it for the love hee beares Chriſt. So a wife for the love ſhee hath found from Chriſt will be ſubject, a child will bee dutifull; ſo a ſervant faithfull. The influence which this love hath in it, carrieth an inſtinct into the ſoule for every ſervice: let God appoint the worke, the love of Chriſt ſhall be the compeller to faithfulneſſe, whether negative, not to filch, not to be uncleane, not to anſwer againe, not to be untruſty: or affirmative, *viz.* to be reverend, chaſte, true, painfull, truſty: I ſay, out of the Schoole of Chriſt this muſt proceed. Hence it was that *Ioſeph*, ſollicited to unchaſteneſſe with his Miſtreſſe, preſently had his hand upon this hilt, How ſhall I doe this and ſinne againſt God? His Maſter was abſent, he might have abuſed him, and he ignorant who hurt him; but *Ioſeph* had another tye, he had conſcience and peace to forfeit, hee had another Maſters worke to looke at, and better wages to loſe, and therefore this peace ruled him, and he durſt not for his ſoule, (if all pleaſure, profit, eaſe and rewards in the world had been offered) have attempted ſuch unfaithfulneſſe. Learne yee Maſters in whom your greateſt ſtrength with ſervants lies; not in your awe, feares, rewards or puniſhments: all your ſuccours muſt come from a deeper tye, you muſt be beholding for all the faithfulneſſe of ſervants to their God and their conſcience. Tye them there and you have them bound for burſting, elſe a wet eele is as eaſily held by the tail, as ſuch ſervants when they ſee their opportunity. Hence is that triumph of *Paul* about *Oneſimus*: Oh! ſaith he, I have begotten him in my chaines! and now I ſend him backe to thee, no filcher or fugitive, but profitable to mee and thee, one that now may be truſted. This is the firſt main thing, without this, I would wiſh no Maſter to truſt a ſervant further then he ſees him, let his ſhewes be never ſo great.

Joh. 21.

Gen. 39. 9.

Philem. 11.

Secondly, this will produce ſundry other qualifications in a ſervant tending to faithfulneſſe. Grace only puts wiſdome into a ſervant, and gives him

2. Grace adds all qualifications to a ſervant.

2 Kings

1. Wiſdome to conſider the Lord as the ordainer of all relations.

him a diſcerning eye, to behold God in each ordinance: he acknowledges a divinity, a finger of providence in the ſeverall relations of the family, for great and weighty ends. A common ſervant makes waſh way of his ſervice; lookes at his Maſter for his owne ends, lookes at himſelfe, his abilities: But he lookes not ſo farre as to ſee God the ordainer of relations. For if he did, this would infuſe other principles, as awe, feare, humility, &c. For why? It is God who hath ſo ordered it for the good of a Kingdome, Common-wealth, Church; that there ſhould be ſuperiours, inferiours; ſome meane ones to be trained for time to come to beare rule; others ſuperiours, men of ability, worldly employments, trades, dealings, offices, who alſo have need of inferiours, to be their hands and inſtruments to act and manage for them thoſe buſineſſes which they cannot performe themſelves. And not onely ſo, but alſo it is from God, that the one is ſet over the other, to conveigh & infuſe ſuch skill, art, and knowledge of trades and ſervices, as the inferiour hath not, that ſo by tradition, theſe skills and gifts may be delivered from one to another; and from the ſame God it is, that the inferiour and ignorant, ſhould ſubject himſelfe to that end with all dexterity, diligence and faithfulneſſe.

When once this is underſtood, that it is God and not man who hath deviſed this courſe, not onely in the greateſt government of Princes or Magiſtrates, (for they have their ſervants and officers, as he ſaid to Chriſt, Matth. 8.5.6. I my ſelfe (though a Maſter of an hundred men) am under the authority of the Lord Preſident) but even of meaner authority of ordinary Tradeſmen, whether publicke or private, ingenuous or manuall, civill or eccleſiaſticall, ſpirituall or bodily; ſtill the ſame God is the wiſe orderer and diſpoſer of all: Oh! this thought yokes and ſubdues the ſoule to a wiſe, holy and ſubject eſteeme of government, and a ſetting it up in the ſpirit, as an inviolable ordinance of God, not to be dallied with or prophaned. As the Apoſtle ſaith, All authority (leſſe or more) is from God: By him Princes rule, and by the ſame Officers obey; Maſters command, doe, goe, come; ſervants are ſubject and at their beck: Why? Becauſe they diſcerne a Soveraignty in the ordinance, in the ſuperiour awing, ruling, ſubduing the ſpirits of inferiours; in the other, fearing, adoring and reverencing God in man. Hence *David*, It is the Lord which maketh the people ſubject to me. They rebelled often, but the Lord, (not *Davids* armes, nor *Ioabs* ſword) brought them backe to ſubjection. So that he who diſobeyes a Prince, a Magiſtrate, Miniſter, Maſter, diſobeyeth not man, but God; and ye ought not to obey for terror and puniſhment, but for conſcience. The very brute creature is ſubjected to ſinfull man by this ordinance; and that cauſes the creature to forget his ſtrength, ſwiftneſſe and ſtomacke, and to take bit and bridle, and to be ſubject: elſe who ſhould tame Lions, Beares, Elephants, Horſes, if they knew their ſtrength? Even ſo, this ſenſe of divineneſſe in mans government, cauſeth the inferiours will to forget it ſelfe, and to be ſubject to God in man. So that now although both Maſter and ſervant be Religious, both free men in Chriſt, yet that is no occaſion to fleſh, to withdraw duty, and to turne inferiority to equality, but to acknowledge God in the moſt loving, familiar and curteous governour, and if the Maſter be

Rom. 13.1.2. Prov 8.15. Matth. 8.

Rom. 13.4.5.

be lewd and a divell to the ſervant,(who is godly,)yet he beholds in him that ſacred hand of God, who hath bound his ſpirit to awe and reverence, not to a man for vantage, but to God for conſcience. So much for the ſecond.

3. It produces ſubjection of ſpirit in an inferiour. In two things. 1. Selfe-deniall. 2. Serviceableneſſe.

Thirdly this produces a marvellous gift in a ſervant, (ſtill more procuring faithfulneſſe) and that is ſubjection of ſpirit. Divine authority creates ſubjection in the ſervants ſpirit, and that conſiſts of theſe two things: Firſt, ſelfe-deniall; Secondly, ſerviceableneſſe. For the firſt, It is not the ſtate of an inferiour, which can exempt a man from pride and diſdaine. None is ſo low but he loves to be Maſter of ſomething. Yee ſhall not ſee three or foure cattell together, but one will be Maſter. There is a wofull pride of ſpirit in man, diſdaining to bee under any. As thoſe baſe Jewes,(in their greateſt ſlavery)yet vaunted they were free men and never ſerved any. And hence it is, that we call the meere underling the dogge, as of a Schoole, of a family &c. So loathſome a thing is ſubjection. But marke, let conſcience of love, and ſenſe of divineneſſe in an ordinance, poſſeſſe the ſpirit of a man, and this ſinkes his ſpirit by and by. As it is ſaid, the Queen of Sheba came to *Salomon* with an equall and high ſpirit to diſpute; but ſeeing more then a man in him, lo, her ſpirit fayled her: What is that? She felt an infinite inequality in her ſelfe to *Salomon*, thought it no diſparagement to her ſelfe, to be inferiour to ſo wiſe a man as he: and therefore ſet her heart at reſt from any more bubbling thoughts, and calmed herſelfe to a moſt meeke ſelfe-deniall. If meere gifts will doe ſo, what will grace doe? Surely much more. For as it will cauſe the inferiour to ſinke and beat downe his ſpirit under the authority of a well & ably qualified governour,(as I grant God requires all to be) ſo yet it will diſcover a divine power, even in the weake and unqualified, by vertue whereof, it will deny it ſelfe, and ſay, I quaſh my proud and baſe heart,(which would eaſily diſdaine to ſubmit better parts of wit, skill, Religion, to one that wants all) to God in man, although I ſee nothing in him that ſhould deſerve it.

Joh. 8.33.

1 King 10.5

And this true ſelfe-deniall is the roote of all faithfulneſſe in a ſervant. For pride and ſtoutneſſe in an inferiour will alway be ſlipping necke out of the collar: Shall ſuch an one as I, of ſuch breed, worth, abilities, ſtoop to obey and ſerve, eſpecially ſuch an unworthy one? No, I ſcorne it! Oh! but this ſcorne marres the ſervant, becauſe it deſtroyes the ordinance! God muſt levell thy heart, and fill thy valley, and caſt downe thine hill, that thou maieſt ſay, downe ſtout heart, God lookes not at what thou ſeemeſt otherwiſe, but at thy inferiority, and in that reſpect commands thee not to looke at what thy proud heart would, but at what his ordinance hath thought wiſeſt: Better thou loſe thy proud heart (which ſhall be thy gaine) then God loſe his honour, the ordinance her due regard, and ſo both Kingdome, Church and family, the good which thy ſubjection procures. By this meane the ſtoutneſſe of the heart ſtoops and is convinced, that is but an equall thing it ſhould be ſubject.

And ſecondly, the barre being ſo removed, the heart is let out to the fruits of humbleneſſe; that is, to ſerviceableneſſe. For what ſhould I refuſe to doe, for, or under ſuch a governour, as I ſee by the wiſdome of God ſet over me, for both mine owne, and for a generall good, and the ends

2Kings

ends of providence? If once I ſee how wofull a confuſion it were to pervert an ordinance; how can I chuſe but alſo deeme it a ſtrange unrighteouſneſſe for one under the ordinance to withdraw ſervice? What is ſelfe-deniall, but a letting out, and taking downe of a baſe heart, (thinking it ſelf too good to ſerve) to a willingneſſe in undertaking what ſervice ſoever the rules of honeſt government can impoſe without grudging or contradiction? So that as a proud heart is bound up ſoule and body; ſo an humble ſpirit is enlarged unto every ſuch ſervice, as reaſon guided by Religion, can impoſe. Nothing can come amiſſe to an humble heart; ſelfe-deniall of her owne accord, falls to ſerviceableneſſe. And what wonder? When once the ſpirit of an inferiour hath no drift, will, way of his owne, beſides his Maſters, but is wholly his, and for him: how can it chuſe but utter it, in doing as it is bidden? Goe, come, doe this and he doth it? This for the Third.

4. Grace in inferiors, ſets faith on work.

1. Purgeth the ſoule of ſpeciall diſtempers.

Fourthly, hence comes faith to fall to her worke. For as a Chriſtian in his generall worke of Religion, ſo a ſervant in his ſpeciall relation of ſervice, lives by faith: And how? In theſe three reſpects. Firſt, faith cleanſes out of the ſoule all thoſe diſtempers which uſually poſſeſſe the ſpirit of ſervants. It is not enough for faith to purifie the conſcience in generall from all dead works: But in ſpeciall, it deſcends deeply and ſearcheth the corruption which creepes into duties, into the graces of the ſoule, into the uſe of meanes, into the particular relations wherein the ſoule ſtands to God, whether directly or indirectly: Elſe what were a generall purging of evill which comes not into act? But it purgeth each privy corner of the heart, and brings the heart thus purged before God, in the ſeverall occaſions which are offered. Nothing comes between the cup & the lip in this caſe: All particular falſhood will be hunted out of a ſervant, whoſe heart is cleanſed by faith from all dead workes; all baſeneſſe and diſtempers will give place: There is not one baſe quality of the heart, but if nouriſhed, will corrupt faithfulneſſe; if any one ſtring bee out of tune this harmony will vaniſh: any eaſe or ſloth of heart will make a man unfaithfull in point of diligence: an angry froward heart will make a man unfaithfull in point of anſwering againe and cavilling: any falſhood and hollowneſſe will cauſe unfaithfulneſſe in point of doing the ſervice which it promiſes, as he who ſaid, hee would goe into his Maſters vineyard, yet went not: In a word, a corrupt heart will be unfaithfull to the marriage bed of his Maſter, defile his children with curſed examples, filch away his commodities, report wickedly of him as an hard Maſter, who reapes where he ſowed not, corrupt the reſt of the fellow ſervants, and what not? Onely faith cleanſes the heart of theſe evills, and juſtles them out of place; for how can Chriſt agree with Belial, or theſe with faithfulneſſe?

Matth.21.30.

2. Furniſhes the heart with good qualities.

Secondly, faith frames the image of God in the ſoule, as in generall; ſo in the particular relations of life; that furniſheth the heart with ſweet qualities, with promote faithfulneſſe: What trouble is to an heart which is diligent, to take any paines? To an heart that loves the Maſters good, and is upright, to ſeeke the credit, welfare of the Maſter? To an heart that is well grounded, what baſe commands of an ungodly governour will prevaile againſt faithfulneſſe to God? To an heart well

ſeaſoned

ſeaſoned with grace, for the right manner, due meaſure and the right ends of obeying, what ſervice will be difficult? Now faith it is, which onely can make faithfull.

3. It puts it it into actuall exerciſe.

And thirdly, faith having thus qualified the heart, doth alſo put it into ſervice, cauſeth this habit of fidelity to appeare in the courſe of ſervice; refuſing no employment whereby the heart may utter it ſelfe for Gods ſake, to man; to whom God hath committed authority and commiſſion to preſſe obedience and faithfulneſſe, in a lawfull condition of life; whereof more in the exhortation (if God will) ſhall be ſpoken. I now haſten to the Uſes.

Vſe 1. Bad and unfaithfull ſervants terrified.

The firſt uſe may be juſt Terror and Reproofe to bad and unfaithfull ſervants, who neither looke at faithfulneſſe ere they enter, neither care to practiſe it when they are entred. For Terror firſt, Alas! whither ſhall we goe to finde ſuch as firſt give themſelves to God, and after to their Maſters? Who lookes after entrance, or moulding into Gods principles? They doubt not, but to the worke they are hired unto, they can diſpatch it, (ſo can horſes and oxen) and goe through ſtitch with it! They have been in good houſes they ſay, where there were folke as hard to pleaſe as others, and yet them they could give content too, and they hope they are wiſe enough to make their covenants: But as for being made faithfull, (as *Paul* ſaith, 1 Tim. 1.) and putting into Gods ſervice firſt, alas! they know not what it meanes! ſo they be faithfull droiles and drudges, they thinke more cannot be required, ſo they can doe worke enough, what care they to lye, to ſweare, to guzzle, (at their times appointed) to abuſe and prophane the Sabbaths, to balke the congregation, to runne about their own occaſions, when God ſhould be worſhipped? And if they be reproved, they aske, Is not your worke done? And ſo thinke to ſtoppe all mouthes: But alas! There be yet worſe then theſe! even debaucht and ſlacke hayred companions, whoſe trade and courſe of life it is, to runne from Maſter to Maſter, and when they have wearied one houſe, then runne to another and poyſon that, with their prophane, drunken, uncleane, and curſed qualities? I ſpeake of this Nation of bad ſervingmen, then which generally none are more ignorant of God, or looſe licentious in life: As for faithfulneſſe to their Maſters, they know none, ſave to caſt on their livery, and waite upon them idely at home or abroad, and ſpend their dayes and yeares in a moſt vaniſhing curſed prophaneneſſe. And the truth is, the condition of ſervants in the houſes of great men, (who keepe a retinue and attendance of ſervants for ſtate and number) is ſo idle, and ſlothfull, (for the moſt part) that it is of neceſſity, that ſervants be ſo wicked, eaſe and baſe ſloth ſo defiling them, that whether they depart quickly, they peſter ſo many the more houſes, or if they abide, they defile that houſe ſo deeply, that the taint of it can never bee waſhed out.

A caution

I ſpeake not, as if God denyed to great perſons the liberty of much attendance; But then they ſhould not thinke it a diſparagement unto them, to looke ſo narrowly to the wayes of their ſervants, that when their attendance upon their tables, or their perſons within or without is ended, thay may improve them in ſome ſuch other buſineſſe either ingenuous or mechanique, as may prevent that forlorne and wofull ſottiſhneſſe and

2 Kings

The ſins of bad ſervants.

and ſloth, which when it hath poſſeſſed ſervants, cauſes them to be noyſome to God, to men, yea oft to themſelves, beſides the poyſoning of the family by their examples. If ſervants were firſt leavened with the fear of God, durſt they enter into ſervice upon ſuch tearmes? Now as concerning meaner mens covenant, ſervants or journey-men, what ſhould I ſay? where is there one of tenne, that enters into ſervice with the leaſt ſparke of Religion in them? I dare ſpeake it, this Nation of journey-men, (for the moſt part) is a greater bane to townes and families, then any one beſides. For what is their life, ſave a licking up of the ſcurffe of the Country, yea the depth of Satan, and leaving it behinde them whereſoever they become? So that the lewdneſſe, the ſwearing, the baſtardy, the unſeaſonable houres, and revell route of townes, may as much be fathered upon theſe as any! And as for the beholding of God in the ordinance of ſervants, how far are they off it? They can skill to get into houſes of liberty, where there be no Puritans, where they may have moſt elbowroome, good uſage for meate and drinke, beſt wages; and when they fayle of theſe, get them gone on the ſuddaine, and leave their Maſters in the lurch to provide for themſelves! God they ſee none in an ordinance; their governours they looke at as they ſerve their turne, as they ſhew them countenance, according to the vayles they can get under them: But as for conſcience to deny their proud hearts, to live meekely, ſubjectly and patiently under that yoke which God hath put them under, they are ſo farre from it, that let them be croſſed, their blood being up, they neither will ſpare their Maſters in words, nor deeds, blowes nor wounds! What wonder? They never came where Religion and faith grew, their ſent is ſtill in them, and occaſion being offered, there is no baſeneſſe ſo horrible, but they will commit it, no unfaithfulneſſe ſo great, but they will adventure it? They are traytors to God, how therefore can they chuſe, but be unfaithfull to man?

But all their unfaithfulneſſe is not in the entrance; for what is their practice, ſave a perpetuall trade of unfaithfulneſſe? Witneſſe the infinite company of bankerupts dayly growing, and the decaying of ſo many husbands, tradeſmen and ſhop-keepers; whereof if yee enquire the cauſes, it is an hundred to one, but bad ſervants come in among the chief. If their Maſters be thrifty, circumſpect to overlooke the ſtate of their families, to debar them from free egreſſe and regreſſe too and fro, all their commodities, they blaze them abroad for ſuch hard Maſters and unbeteaming, that it is pitty, they ſay, that a good ſervant ſhould ever come within their doores. And if they diſlike their diet never ſo little, (as not dainty enough, though indeed too good for them) what is their cuſtome, but to combine, and each to lay their heads together to filch their Maſters commodities, bread, wine, beere & what not for the ſerving of their appetite? What is more uſuall among ſervants then to forfeit their truſt, and to uſe thoſe keyes which are committed to their care, for the ſafeguarding of commodities under their hands, in Dayrie, in Almery, Buttery, or the like, for the betraying of them into the hands of them that imbezzel them, by unſeaſonable feaſtings, junketings and merry-makings, their governours perhaps being aſleepe in their beds! And becauſe theſe are thought but trifles, what ſervants almoſt are there now adayes

adayes who may ſafely be truſted, with thoſe thinges (which yet they cannot be well kept from) I meane their Maſters receits, accounts and moneyes which they are truſted with, either as Prentices, Receivers, or Stewards? Servants being now growne to that point, that (further then they are watched narrowly) they will have it by hooke or crooke. How many unfaithfull *Hazaels* are there to the lives and perſons of their Maſters, as the dayly experience of Aſſiſes and Seſſions doe witneſſe? How many villanous wretches to the peace of their governours, being ſo audacious as to go between barke and tree, breeding ſuſpitions, jealouſies and debates betweene man and wife, that having done ſo, they may worke thereupon to incorporate themſelves into more credit? How many are traytors to their chaſtity, maydes impudent and whoriſh to allure their Maſters, men their Miſtreſſes or Dames to uncleanneſſe, overthrowing the foundation of the family, by ſuch baſtardy, beſides the kindling of another fire that will never goe out?

2 King. 8. 15.

How many are there, who like *Oneſimus* rob their Maſters of their monies & plate, and then play the fugitives, putting their Maſters to endleſſe trouble and regret of body & minde, and yet loſe their labour when all is done? How many ſervants be unfaithfull in the children? Some tainting them with ſecret lewd qualities, ill counſells, bad examples, corrupt and rotten communication, betraying them to vile company, uncleannes, to rob their Parents, to be ſtout againſt them and rebellious? How many children may thanke unfaithfull ſervants, for their depth of defilement, yea for the utter ruine of their bodyes and ſoules! How many have ſtollen away their deare children, married againſt their conſents, expoſing them to Parents hatred, and to extreame miſery? How many *Gehazi's* which make uſe and gaine of Maſters to their reproach and diſhonour, gaining by their extreame loſſe, not caring what become of their credit or thrift ſo they may raiſe their owne fortunes? And no doubt the greater the place of ſervants is, and the temptations they have, the more foule and odious their practice is, making their Maſters to bee counted hard, that they may goe away with the gaine; or elſe ſlyly plotting and ſharing with ſuch as they trafficke with to conceale their theft and falſhood. How many unfaithfull ſervants to the ſoules of their Maſters, as *Doeg* to *Saul*, alway ſuggeſting falſe accuſations againſt them who are moſt faithfull to them, that ſo they may betray them? How many who are Bauds & Pandars to their Maſters, to helpe them in their curſed purpoſes to procure the harlots, and keepe their counſells, to draw them into endleſſe expences, luſts, quarrells with their Chriſtian yokefellowes, lewd and clandeſtine companies, waſting of their ſtates and patrimonies? How many that ſerve their turnes, (as *Sauls* ſervants did his, in bringing him to a witch) to borrow great ſummes of mony for the ſerving of their pleaſures? But no ſooner are their Maſters come to ruine, but theſe Pariſites fall off like lice from a dead corps? Oh! the unſpeakeable miſchiefe that unfaithfull ſervants create to their Maſters.

How many ſow ſuch diſſentions and quarrells betwene their Maſters and others, (like baſe pickethanks) till thereupon ſutes, yea challenges, duells and bloudſhed follow? Againe, what an unfaithfull humour is it in ſervants, to be more for ſtrangers and their content, then for their

2 Kings

Maſters benefit, giving, lending and beſtowing upon ſuch as they pleaſe, more then either they have leave to doe or thanke for, that hereby they may enhanſe their owne prayſe and account? What truth is there to loſe account with the Maſter, to procure it with the ſtranger, by loſſe of fidelity? How doe many lewd ſervants ſlander fidelity, with the aſperſion of covetouſneſſe? They will never bee baſe and worldly (they ſay) to be counted faithfull while they live! If they lived under beggars it were another matter: but as long as they live under rich men they will have it, and let them (in Gods name) keepe a good houſe with that they have! meane time, neither have their Maſters ever the more thanke, nor their buſineſſe better done, beſides the needleſſe waſting of the creature to the value of ſcores yea hundreds through the yeare, not for need, but a baſe cuſtome; and there be ſervants alſo as unthankfull in their conniving at others, as theſe are waſtefull themſelves, thinking it rather their reproach, then faithfulneſſe to betray and prevent ſuch pillers and pollers of their Maſters; and when theſe are put away or ſuffer for their falſhood, how doe they fill the Country with clamours and uproares againſt their innocent Maſters for rejecting them? How common a courſe is it with ſervants to ſpare themſelves in point of paines and providence for their Maſters; their eaſe makes cold in winter, heat in ſummer, to bee tedious to them, labour, prevention, watchfulneſſe over the cattell, commodities and buſineſſe of their Maſters, how burdenſome is it? How little ſerves their turnes? How doe they murmure, if their taske pleaſe them not? What ſhifts have they to avoid it?

If weather, if travell upon errands and journeies, if worke bee againſt them, how doe they cavill? How ready to thruſt forth others and to grudge (with him in the Goſpel) that the heat of the day lyes upon them more then others? So farre are they from enduring *Iacobs* ſervice with ill tearmes! If wages pleaſe not, how doe they caſt their Maſters in teeth with other mens ſervants? How full of eye-ſervice are they? If their Maſters ſee them, how nimble at a ſtart are they, but if their backes bee turned, how reſty and lazy? And what melting, ſpoiling, breaking, loſing, and battering the commodities of their Maſters within doores? What neglecting of their cattell, fences, annoyance of other neighbours abroad, ſo that all goes to havocke for lacke of diligence? It were endleſſe to mention all: Ye Maſters know better and by more wofull experience, (who keep many and of both ſexes in your families) then my ſelf can doe. But oh you unfaithfull ſervants! When I have ſaid what I can, you can cover your falſhood from men, and ſo hope to doe from God: but although the Law take not alway hold upon you, to take away your lives, or to ſtocke, whippe, brand, impriſon or puniſh you here; be ſure of it, the Lord Jeſus will one day judge you for your prankes and rex that you have plaid in your ſervices, either plaguing you with the like ſervants, or elſe pronouncing that terrible doome upon you, Caſt that unfaithfull ſervant into utter darkeneſſe, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth! And yet I have knowne many my ſelfe of both ſexes, who have (many yeares after their ſtealths and cheats committed) come in and (after conviction of conſcience by the word) made outcries, and asked what ſhall we doe? Our Maſters and Miſtreſſes are dead, their

Gen. 31.40.

Their children we know not off: What ſhall our ſtollen goods be done with? How ſhall reſtitution be made? Their conſciences have ſo torne them, and their old morſells have ſo glowed and heartburned in their ſtomacks, that they could have no peace till they could vomit them by ſuch reſtitution as they could make: And whereas others bee more ſtiffe and ſtout then to be ſo convinced, let them know, their ſin and damnation ſleepe not: The Lord ſhall awaken them one day to their coſt, although now they can digeſt any gobbets. But I have held you too long; Here even abruptly I am compelled to breake off, reſerving the reſt to the next occaſion.

Let us pray,

&c.

The end of the Tenth Lecture.

THE ELEVENTH LECTVRE
Still continued upon this thirteenth VERSE.

VERSE XIII.

And his ſervants came neere, and ſaid unto him, Maſter, if the Prophet had bidden thee doe ſome great thing, wouldeſt not thou have done it? How much more then, when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh and be clean?

VERSE 14. *Then hee went downe and dipped himſelfe in Iorden, &c.*

2Kings

THE laſt Sermon (beloved in our Lord and Saviour) wee entred into this thirteenth Verſe; and (as you know) opened, divided and handled the coherence of it; then came to the firſt of the three generalls in the Verſe, concerning the duty of ſervants faithfulneſſe: The ground whereof, with reaſons, proofes, and explication of the grace of faithfulneſſe, when wee had finiſhed, we beganne with the firſt uſe of Terror againſt all unfaithfull ſervants, both in their entrance and practiſe.

Vſe 2. Reproofe. Religious ſervants failing in their faithfulneſſe, are blameworthy.

Now I proceed to the uſe of Reproofe; and that belongs to ſuch ſervants, as though in profeſſion Religious, yet in their particular relation to their Maſters, walke as if they had a diſpenſation, cleave not cloſely to faithfulneſſe, nor to the commands of their ſuperiours, as if God from heaven ſpake unto them, If thou love me bee faithfull in thy ſervice: As it was once when the Goſpel came among bondſlaves, they tooke it, as if a flag of defiance had beene ſet up, to proclaime liberty to them from their Maſters; pretending that if they beleeved in Chriſt, they were freemen from the Law of God, much more from men, inſomuch that *Paul* was faint to blow a trumpet of retreat to their defiance, and to fetch them under line againe: Even ſo it is here with many

Ephe.6.5.6.7. 1 Tim.6.1.

of

of our ſervants, if once religious, they abuſe this colour to make them libertines; how careleſſe about their buſineſſe, ſlacke, negligent, ſpending and waſtefull are many ſuch? If they make their conditions, what liberties doe they covenant for? How doe they (under covert of hearing the word) take courage to themſelves, to ſpend daies after daies in their journeies, companies, and private affaires, to the detriment of their Maſters? They ſeeke not the honour of the Goſpel by their double ſubjection and faithfulneſſe, nor procure a freedome from their Maſters good will, requiting their diligence; but that they have they will extort it as a due belonging to them: So ſaucy and checkmate with their Maſters if religious, ſo ſcornefull and rebellious towards the ignorant, as thinking them too meane for their ſervice, ſo full of tart anſwers, and taunting ſpeeches, ſo cenſorious, uncharitable, unthankefull for kindeneſſes, boaſting of their owne gifts above theirs; as if they were fitter to rule their Maſters, then they them, diſdainfull to their fellow ſervants, curious about their proviſion and diet, as that they open the mouthes of the bad, to wiſh ſervants rather ignorant and carnall then ſuch; and all by their hypocriticall ſhews of that which is not in them; for were they in truth that they goe for, their hearts would rather be on their right hand then their left, they would rather bee jealous of themſelves, wary leſt any thing ſhould appeare in them repugning to ſubjection and faithfulneſſe, labouring by their uttermoſt ſelfe-deniall to winne credit to the Goſpel, by their humble, harmeleſſe and painefull ſervice: this is according to God; the other is baſe and fleſhly: and commonly where a ſervant is faithfull, the Lord ſo honours their faithfulneſſe, that even (as *Putifar* ſeeing *Ioſephs* fidelity) betruſt them with their matters above all their fellowes, whereas theſe are leſſe truſted then any, and if they have been truſted by ſuch as knew them not, they have bewraied themſelves to be of a baſtard brood, often running away when their turne is ſerved, and leaving Religion in the lurch and to ſuffer through their baſeneſſe. To theſe I ſay no more, repent in time, diſhonour not the truth of God by your lewdneſſe: I have ſeene few of this ſtraine, but they proved lewd hypocrites and openly debauched in time: Therefore prevent the Lord by ſerious amendment, before hee pull the viſor from your faces, and make your nakedneſſe to appeare to all that behold you, that ſo ſome amends may be made to that truth of God which you have diſhonoured, when as all ſhall ſee that you were arrant varlots, ſuch as Religion can receive no blemiſh from. And ſo much for this ſecond uſe of Reproofe.

The pranks of many ſuch ſervants.

Gen. 39 4.

Let a third uſe then (brethren) be an uſe of examination, for all ſervants who would approve themſelves to God, to try themſelves in this point of faithfulneſſe. *Queſt.* But how ſhall I try it? *Anſw.* By theſe foure or five Rules.

Vſe 3. Examination.

Foure rules of Triall.

Firſt, no true faithfulneſſe muſt bee beſide the word, but fetch her warrant & ſtampe from thence. Whatſoever is from any other is ſinfull. There is a wicked and baſe faithfulnes in the world, as we ſee in the raſh artempts of many deſperate ſervants, who (to approve themſelves to carnall Maſters, ruſh themſelves into ſuch dangers, as they neither have power to overcome, nor calling to undertake. See that example of *Davids* ſervants

2 Sam. 23. 15. 16.

2 Kings

servants, who to demerit their Master, and to publish their valour, undertooke (two or three of them) to breake through an host of enemies to fetch him water. An ungrounded attempt in them, and a worse motion in *David*, as appeareth after in his shaming himselfe for tempting God, and powring that out for a drinke offering, which was the purchase and price of the pretious lives of men. Here seemed great loyalty, but it was a will service, not an obeying in the Lord. So many servants pickthankes, to indeere themselves with their proud Masters, affect to drinke healths in honour to them, and whosoever refuses to pledge them, they are ready to give him the stab, to defie him, and challenge him into the field. These are double diligently faithfull, which service a good Master should abhorre as to hot and to heavy.

2. Rule.

Secondly, good faithfulnesse, must not (much lesse) be contrary to a word, for that is doubly irregular. Such was that faithfulnesse which both *Paul* pleaded for, and (when the rest abhorred) *Doeg* and his Edomites performed, to satisfie his bloudy demand, in slaying those hundred eighty Priests of the Lord: Also that treacherous obedience, imposed by a desperate Master and fulfilled by *Absolons* servants, in the bloudy murther of *Ammon*. Not unlike whereto was the faithfulnesse of those servants of *Saul*, in directing him to a witch: Such is the service of those necessary mischiefes who hang about the sleeves of vitious & prodigall gentlemen or spendthrifts, who procure them content to their lusts, as mony upon unreasonable tearmes to fulfill their lavish expences, harlots to satisfie their lusts, debauched gamesters for their pleasures, attending them, counselling them, and spurring them forward to ride on in their miserable courses, till hell devoure them. As that forlorne fellow said, that he was so addicted to *Marius* his Master, that although he knew his Master ought not to bid him burne the Capitoll, yet if he would bid him doe it he would. Such Monsters of faithfulnesse as to please the humors of their Masters, will doe what ever they enjoyne them; if they bee bidden to breake the Sabbath for them, they will doe it, if to sweare and to forsweare themselves they are ready, if to stabbe or wound an enemy, they are for them: Yea and we have such as write bookes in the justifying of such servants, as obey their Masters in the breaking of the Sabbath, as if a servant were not bound to have any explicite faith or conscience of his owne, but onely inwrapped in the bosome of his Master who may be an Atheist. No, the command is cleare, Exod. 20. Thou and thy wife, thy manservant and thy maidservant, &c. Each one must have a conscience for himselfe to direct his obedience. If *Peter* in the loyall defence of his Master, smiting off the eare of *Malchus* had a check (by vertue of a speciall exception in that case) what then shall the bloudy, cruell and prophane service of such as these be deemed?

So those Ziphites. 1 Sam. 23. 20. 1 Sam. 22. 9. 2 Sam. 13. 28. 1 Sa m 28. 7.

Joh. 18. 10.

3. Rule. Ephe. 6. 5. 6. Coloss. 3. 22.

Thirdly, true faithfulnesse must bee single faithfulnesse, sincere and simplehearted, from the very heart roote, (as *Paul* speakes) not for base ends of our owne and avantage. Many there bee who for praise, great vayles, to flatter and picke thanke with their Masters will at the running pull, doe great things, who yet in coole bloud, are the verie st cowards and sluggards of all. And many others are like *Gehazi* in their Masters eye, who so diligent, industrous and active as they? Onely to cover

2 King. 5. 25.

their

their habituall unfaithfulneſſe, and to get themſelves a name, or to ſerve themſelves into their Maſters opinions and affections; but no ſooner out of ſight, but (as he following after *Naaman*) running after their owne ends.

Fourthly, it muſt not be againſt the Law of piety, or charity, mercy and compaſſion; It muſt bee good faithfulneſſe. For a ſervant to bee faithfull to his Maſter, in the adviſing of him to alienate that from Gods uſe which belongs to him; or for a ſervant in the Market (under colour of faithfulneſſe) to overſell his corne or other commodities to the detriment of the poore, and beyond his Maſters allowance, are both unfaithfull faithfulneſſe. 4. Rule. See Tit. 2. 10.

Fifthly, it muſt be equall and entire, like it ſelf in all parts of faithfulnes, in all kindes of buſineſſes. Some ſervants if they be ſet about what they like, are very nimble and negotious, but in other, that ſutes not with their humour, caſt it off. Many alſo will for the time, tugge hard and toile at buſineſſe: But no ſooner have they ſpent their ſtrength in that kinde, but they will run out as faſt in another, and be as couragious & painfull at the pot, or be idle otherwiſe, as they were at their worke, never well till they have drunke themſelves under boord. *Abner* was a faithfull ſervant to the houſe of *Saul*: But why? That he might the more equally have his will, and goe without checke whatſoever villany hee ſhould attempt. And therefore being told of the defiling of *Rizpah* the concubine, his ſervice withered, and he had done his worke. Such are many ſervants now adaies; give them their ſwinge, let them have their will, to doe worke without ſubjection, and they promiſe wonders; but goe about to teach them, reprove, correct them, then they ſcorne you, and they will worke no longer. An unbroken, unſubject heart is all at a running pull, and from Selfe, nothing from a principle of equality or ſubjection. 5. Rule. 2 Sam. 3.

Laſtly, good faithfulneſſe (as *Paul* ſtiles it) is active, ſtirring, ſedulous faithfulneſſe; it is loving and therefore fruitfull and abundant. It is not enough for a ſervant to pretend himſelfe faithfull by a ſecret habit within unſeene; that is a barren faithfulneſſe which hath no daughters attending her; ſhe muſt not onely beare the minde not to be treacherous and hurtfull, (for ſo was that unprofitable ſervant, who brought his Maſter the talent in a napkin) But ſhe muſt have all theſe properties which commend a faithfull ſervant: A ſedulous eye to obſerve all occaſions, within or without, tending to remonſtrate the habit within; alſo alacrity, activity in buſineſſe, skilfulneſſe, providence and prevention to foreſee the way of benefit, to avoid loſſe and dammage, vigilancy, dexterity, curteouſneſſe, affableneſſe, love, ſubjection and unweariedneſſe. It muſt alway tend to operation and exerciſe, not affecting a careleſſe, indifferent & fulſome faithfulneſſe: A looſe ſervant will drive out the cattell out of his Maſters corne, or helpe to pull his beaſt out of the ditch, when he is told of it, or gaſtred to it: But an active ſervant will prevent both to his uttermoſt, that howſoever caſualities muſt be, yet they may be few. *Iacob* bare not onely a fidelity within, as raked under the aſhes, but at all ſeaſons, early, late, in froſt, in heate, was ever upon the wing of circumſpect prevention, and watchfull diligence: And in truth this is the ſoule of faithfulneſſe, going through all and every object of his ſervice. 6. Rule. Rom. 12. 11.

2. Kings

Conclusion of the Triall.

ſervice. Try your ſelves (ye ſervants) by theſe and ſuch like markes; and if ye finde (as I feare moſt of ye will) your ſelves behinde hand in any of them, take warning: We Gods Miniſters are told to our faces, oftimes by your Maſters, who grone under theſe burthens, that we are frequent in telling them of their faults; but let your ſervants runne riot. Now the text pulles me by the eare to reach you out your (*Demenſum*) as needfull for you, as your meat and drinke: Such of you as never were faithfull, I heape theſe hot coales upon your heads, and pray God to kindle ſome ſparke or other of this grace in you, that it may appeare that this doctrine is from God, and came ſeaſonably dropping as the ſmall raine or dew: And ſuch of you, as are faithfull, and yet ruſty and overgrowne, in the feare of God, by theſe trialls ſearch out what ſcurfe hath mixt it ſelfe with your goodneſſe, that that which is crooked may be rectified, and not quite turned out of the way, but purged and reformed. And ſo much for this third uſe.

Heb. 12. 9.

Vſe 4. Inſtruction. Maſters chuſe your ſervants by this faithfulneſſe.

I haſten to the fourth uſe of inſtruction: And that is to all Maſters who deſire good ſervants. As ye would try an earthen veſſell or a peece of ſilver by the ring of it, ſo chuſe a ſervant by his faithfulneſſe. Maſters never ſo cried out of bad ſervants as now; but when they come to chuſe them, they looke leaſt of all at faithfulneſſe; chuſe not ſervants by other complements onely: Oh! he is a proper man to ſtand about my table, to attend my perſon, a fellow that hath excellent skill in keeping an hawk, a very good huntſman, or he is a very fine fellow at a weapon, of fine activity to dance, to vault, to bowle, to keep me company: Chuſe for no part whatſoever, till you have choſen for fidelity, ſubjection and ſelfe-deniall.

Pſal. 101. 6.

David could ſay, Mine eye ſhould be to the faithfull of the land, he that walketh in a perfect way, he ſhall ſerve me: A ſlanderer, a proud hearted one, a deceitfull perſon, or a lyar ſhall not abide in my ſight. Chuſe ſuch as in whom thy heart may reſt, as well behinde thy backe, as before thy face; undoubtedly the chiefe fault of bad ſervants, is the choice of ill Maſters, whoſe hearts affect not a ſervant for his faithfulneſſe, but for any ſecond hand property. A faithfull drudge pleaſes them better then a faithfull ſervant. But by that time they finde, their families are tainted with uncleanneſſe, their childrens manners corrupted, their goods waſted, and the reſt of the ſervants poyſoned with drunkenneſſe, ſwearing, when they ſee the wound ſo feſtred that they cannot tell how to cure it, then they cry out, it is time to give over houſekeeping, ere bad ſervants deſtroy all. Nay many bad Maſters abhorre a Puritan ſhould come within their doores, till baſe ſervants have undone them, and then they wiſh themſelves and all Puritans! But let this be your counſell, if ſervants will not ſhun unfaithfull qualities, let Maſters ſhun unfaithfull ſervants, if they were knowne to encourage ſuch, if your houſes could hold ſuch, like would to like, And where the carcaſſe is, thither the yong Eagles would reſort. Strange it is to ſee how wiſe men are in other things, to diſcerne every mans excellency in his element; if wee goe to ſea, wee will chuſe us a Pilot able to ſteere and rule his ſhip and ſave us from danger; if wee to builde us an houſe, wee will have a Carpenter who can builde skilfully and ſtrongly, ſuch an houſe for us, as will ſtand againſt all winde and tempeſts: But when wee come to chuſe

Luke 17. 37.

ſervants

ſervants, wee chuſe them for complement, and for trifles never looking at that which truely conſtitutes a ſervant, *viz.* his ſubjection or faithfulneſſe.

Papiſts put us downe for government.

Goe to a Colledge of Jeſuits, and looke what novices they entertaine: They love children witty, apt, active, for their turnes; but becauſe they cannot tell what hot ſervice they may ſet them about, they will be ſure of one thing, or elſe they wil ſuſpect all the reſt, they will have them ſubject, they will be Maſters of their wills, abſolutely unſubſiſting in themſelves, meerly nullified, that whatſoever they put upon them, they may be for it, and then they count them theirs indeed. Doe you chuſe ſervants thus, and ye are happy, eſpecially your ſelves reſolving to be under God, that you may not abuſe their wills to prophaneneſſe, but uſe them to faithfull ſervice: Even you have hot worke to doe alſo, bee therefore Maſters of their wills; you have Gods Sabbaths to hallow, you have children to be brought up, you have ſometime weighty buſineſſe to ſend them about, great ſummes to bee paid or received: What ſhall ſecure you in all theſe, ſave faithfulneſſe? Once a knot of Maſters met together, and fell on talking of their ſervants, one boaſted of his, and ſaid, he had one bred well, that could carry himſelfe bravely; another had one could runne a horſe or ride him well; a third had one that would doe worke enough, and ſo forth: One among the reſt ſtepping forth, asked them, but tell me (I pray you) will not theſe ſervants of yours, ſometimes be drunke? Yes, that they would. And would they not teach their Maſters what worke they ſhould ſet them about? Yes. And had they not horrible proud ſtomacks? Yes that they had. Alas! quoth he, you perceive nothing at all: For (upon point) theſe are your Maſters, you are their ſlaves and ſervants. I have ſervants at home, which I confeſſe want ſome of theſe qualities which yours have; but I for my part choſe my ſervants not by that they had ſo much, as by that they wanted, not by having this wit, that skill, preſence, ableneſſe to doe a meſſage, but by their wanting a will of their own, a proud ſtomack, and (ſaith he) I finde my choice beſt. For why? Your ſervants know this and that, but my ſervants will learne any thing they know not; your ſervants can doe ſo and ſo, but mine will doe what I liſt; you have your ſervants fingers ends and outſides at your commands, I have my ſervants will at my girdle, you have ſervants tied by cords of ſhame, feare, praiſe or wages; but I have mine tied by iron chaines of ſubjection and faithfulneſſe: my ſervants be not ſo proper fellowes as yours, but I dare truſt them in my cloſet or with my purſe; my ſervants are not ſo quaint of ſpeech as yours, but they are affraid of my diſpleaſure; my ſervants are meaner then yours, but mine will beare a reproofe: And who (thinke you) hath the better ſervants? All concluded this man to have the beſt; but then they would needs know if he had any ſuch to ſpare, that hee might helpe them to ſome? He told them, if he could, the matter ſtood not in that; they muſt doe as he did; for they uſed to take and chuſe, he uſed to chuſe and take, they met with bad and made them worſe, he, if he met with raw ones, he made them ripe, if with good ones, hee made them better; meaning that the choice of a ſervant, and the rule of a ſervant, muſt make good ones. And ſo let it be (brethren) your courſe in

Note.

2Kings

in Gods feare: To get a good ſervant of another mans providing, is no furniture worth the ſpeaking of: Service is no inheritance; good ones may ſoone be gone: But chuſe them and rule them, and ſo have them: Let God be chiefe and make your choice, and beare the chiefe ſway, and then you ſhall have good ſervants; ſubject and faithfull ones, have all qualities infolded in one, if they want skill they ſcorne not to learne, if they faile, they deſire but to be taught, if they obey not, they refuſe no reproofe or puniſhment; for their wills are their Maſters, not their owne, and looke what they faile in, it is by error or infirmity, not wilfulneſſe; one ſuch ſervant will doe better ſervice in a yeare, then another in two. Boare him in the eare if thou take liking, and he love thy houſe, and be not weary of him, deſire no change, let him or her be thy ſervant for ever. So much for this fourth uſe.

Vſe 5. Exhortation.

To conclude then, let this be Exhortation and Comfort. Exhortation to ſervants not to know this or that, but to bee faithfull; not to have ſuch and ſuch parts, but to have one worth them all, ſubjection and faithfulneſſe. Learne here of *Naamans* ſervants: What a ſhame is it, that ſuch poore heathens ſhould come forth ſo ſuddenly under the anvile of this one preſent occaſion, formed and moulded, and thou under all Gods diſcipline ſhouldeſt be no better? Oh! you ſervants remember what a long race of unfaithfulneſſe, riot, falſhood, ſtealth, ſtomacke, diſobedience, rebellion, you have runne hitherto: Oh! that I could but ſee one *Oneſimus* here this day, one fugitive, one lewd and ſlothfull or wilfull wretch, whom this my doctrine might convince and convert to God? But truly (brethren) I ſee ſo few broken in peeces for their errors, ſo few penitent and tender for their old pranks, that I am afraid to put new wine of Exhortation into ſuch old bottells, for fear all ſhould break & be ſpilt! I have met with ſome (I thank God) & I ſee no cauſe why the Lord ſhould not take ſome of ye napping in your ſervice and the ſins thereof, as others in the way of their bad government, marriage or childhood. What have ye gone from ſervice to ſervice, have ye left your rags behinde you and ſcattered your ſcurffe ſo in the places where yee have become, that you think it now too late to repent? Are you ſo ſapped & ſoked in your way, that you begin to thinke there is no hope? Beware of being ſo deſperate! Say thus, Is it not enough Lord, that I have beene ſo lazy, ſo falſe fingered, ſo bold, ſo anſwering againe, drunke at times, looſe in liberties, not for my Maſters ends, but mine owne; but now I muſt fulfill my meaſure, adde drunkenneſſe to thirſt, and an hard heart to my other prankes! No Lord, this were not to bee an unfaithfull ſervant to a man (which is bad) but a deſperate one and impenitent to thee, which is curſed! If *Oneſimus* had not robbed his Maſter, he had never met with *Paul*, nor beene converted; his periſhing was his happineſſe! Thou hadſt grace for him O Lord! thou madeſt him faithfull to thy ſelfe, purgeſt him of his baſeneſſe, as deeply ſeated in him (for ought I know) as mine is in me, that thou mighteſt have the honour: Thou madeſt him faithfull, putteſt him into thine own worke, ſetteſt thy marke on him, ſendeſt him backe of a wretch good for naught, good for all thinges: Ah Lord! This day my ſinfull ſervice comes to my remembrance, Lord batter me, breake and thaw mine heart, put me in hope, pardon my ſin, put

Bad ſervants muſt not think it too late for them to repent.

put me in to the Lord Jeſus his Schoole, cleanſe me of all my cheats and prankes, and make me a true *Oneſimus* fit for thine uſe, according to thine heart, and I doubt not but out of thy forge, mine heart ſhall bee framed and moulded to all ſubjection and faithfulneſſe to man!

Beg it hard, Lord teach me to adore thy wiſdome in ordaining ſervants to their places, and Maſters to be their governours! Lord diſcover thy ſoveraignty to me, and ſhine thy ſelfe with thine authority upon my Maſter and Miſtreſſe, that I may ſee God in their government, either becauſe they are holy, or elſe becauſe they are governours: If I ſee not ſuch a Maſter as I would, let me ſee maſterſhip from thee, and bee awed under it: Lord take my will out of my boſome, and put in thine: Speak Lord, thy ſervant heareth, give me a will to be ſubject, and bee as thou wilt, and then command and ſpare not, I will doe not onely what thy ſelfe, but what man under thee commandeth! And it ſhall be my heaven and happineſſe to be under for conſcience ſake! Give me alſo faith, Lord, to create all ſerviceable qualities in me, to lythe, to forme, and to accommodate my ſpirit and members to all welpleaſing (without flattery) and obedience! Let me under a good Maſter bee ſubject and faithfull with thankefulneſſe; to a bad one, for conſcience, not compulſion, as ſerving the Lord Chriſt! Sundry charges Lord, thou giveſt by thine Apoſtles, *Paul* and *Peter*, Servants be ſubject to your Maſters in all feare, not onely to the good, but alſo to the froward; for this is thankeworthy, if a man for conſcience ſake endure griefe wrongfully: Servants obey in all things your Maſters, not with eye-ſervice as men pleaſers, but with ſingleneſſe of heart fearing God, Doing, it heartily as unto God, not unto men, knowing that of him ye ſhall receive the inheritance, for yee ſerve the Lord Chriſt. And ſo in other places. Lord write this Law of thine in mine inward parts! Thou haſt alſo in thy word not onely ſcattered the examples of vile ſervants. *Ziba*, *Gehazi*, *Iudas* and others, to tremble at and abhorre, but alſo of faithfull ones, Lord, to follow and imitate: Thou haſt ſet forth *Eliezers* example, that old truſty ſervant, to the good of his Maſters ſonne: Thoſe ſervants of *Abigail* to the life of her and her husband, that of *Ioſeph* to the chaſtity of his Miſtreſſe, that of *Cornelius* his ſervants to the ſoule of their Maſter, thoſe of the ſervants that occupied talents to the outward advantage of their Maſter, that of *Davids*, for the ſuccour and reliefe of their Maſter in ſtraits, the Centurions to the content and buſineſſe of their Maſter, *Rhode* faithfull to Gods Miniſters, and ſo of others: No one object of faithfulneſſe, but ſome patterne of it or other, thou haſt added to ſweeten it to aſſure me of the poſſibleneſſe of obeying it.

1 Pet. 2. 18.

Coloſſ. 3. 22.

Gen. 24. 10. 1 Sam. 25. Matth. 25. Acts 10. 22. Texts alledged above.

Oh! give to thy ſervant ſomewhat of all theſe, that I may be all in one, a caſt peece without cracke or flaw, (in reſpect of unfaithfulneſſe) and the reſt, cover O Lord, accept and pardon! Be earneſt I ſay with the Lord, beg of him an underſtanding heart, put not all over to thy Maſter; ſay not, looke you Maſter what you command (for that concernes not me) I muſt doe all you bid me: No, examine thy Maſters commands ere thou obey them: But if they be according to God, ſcruple them not, yea although they be not, yet if but negatives onely, forbeare for a time, and provoke not by rebellion: ſay not, I will not forgoe ſuch a Sermon, ſuch

2 Kings

ſuch a duty of Gods worſhip: But if it bee poſitively bad, abhorre it. Beg alſo the ſpirit and life of this faithfulneſſe: Put thy ſelfe forth by occaſion; for a good ſervant is never tried, till he be put to it throughly; be in one as another ſervice, wholly your Maſters, watch and bee upon wing for faithfulneſſe, picke out duties, be ready for duties, be unwearied: Let the honour of thy Maſter, the truſt of thy Maſter, abſent or preſent, the good of children, whether abroad in fields, at home, working thy ſelfe, overſeeing others, among fellow-ſervants, at praier in family, about a journey and meſſage of weight, about thy lawfull liberties: Still let this ſoule of faithfulneſſe be wholly in all and each part, to guide thee aright. The inſtinct of ſubjection and faithfulneſſe will teach thee to ſpeake and doe that, which thy Maſter himſelfe cannot teach thee. Occaſions of providence will teach thee how to anſwer, perſwade, prevent, when thy Maſter is farre off. *Eliezer* and *Cornelius* his ſervants might be truſted to ſay, what they ſaw meete, the one to *Laban* and *Rebecca*, the other to *Peter*. And when thou haſt done all, let thy concluſion be, Remember me O Lord, not for my goodneſſe, but in thy goodneſſe, and according to my faithfulneſſe: I ſhall account pardon my beſt reward, becauſe at the beſt I have but been an unprofitable ſervant. This for the fifth uſe.

Uſe 6. Faithfull Servants may be comforted Heb.6.10.

To which I adde Conſolation to all faithfull ſervants: Alas poore wretches! you thinke you tread a maze of confuſion and worke, and are caſt into a corner to play the drudges: As thoſe Eunuches in *Ieremy*, yee thinke your ſelves cut off from name, memory or reward! But God overlookes not the labour of your love! Oh! It would not grieve you, I ſay, if you might have a good word, countenance or acceptance!

1. Encour.

But conſider I pray you whom ſerve you? A *Nabal*, or the Lord Chriſt! Therefore be cheerefull! Your buſineſſe is not the thing God lookes at, be it never ſo poore in kitching or in a ditch; the ſubjection and faithfulneſſe of heart is all which God lookes at: Thy ſcouring ſpits, or ditching, or dunging the fields, (with ſuch an heart) ſhall be more to the Lord, then the worke of a Juſtice of peace, carried by oppreſſion and injuſtice. And the Lord can plead thy wronged cauſe in due time againſt thy bad Maſter: Be thou faithfull, though borne downe by flatterers; God will bring forth thy light in due time, and thy vertue (the whiles) ſhall be thy exceeding reward. God ſhall ſend thee a good Maſter to requite thee for all the wrong which a bad hath done thee.

2.

Againe, know it, the Lord priſes ſubjection above all qualities, more then any man can. And yet *Philip* the King of Spaine (if he might be beleeved) when he heard that his under generall of his fleet in eighty eight, I mean the Duke of Medina ſhould ſay, had it not been for obedience to his Lord the great Duke of Parma, who charged him to attend his comming, he could have put England hard to it: Anſwered, it now grieves me not that I have loſt that Kingdome, I ſee I have one ſervant who knowes how to be ſubject, whom I priſe above it: whatſoever he did, the Lord priſes thy obedience above a world of rebellious ſervants.

3.

And againe, be not drawne by feare or man pleaſing, to diſhonour God. For there ſhall bee no acceptance of perſons: It ſhall not boote *Abſalons* ſervants in that day, to alledge wee were dogged to it by our wicked

wicked Maſter: The Lord moſt juſtly plagues baſe ſervants by their lot to bee ſo; as thoſe of *Ahazia*, who came to fetch downe *Elija* from the toppe of the mount: The Lord deſtroied them in their ſervice, their mends was in their owne hand. So ſaith *Paul*, There ſhall bee no reſpect of perſons with God, but a puniſhment to him that hath done badly: Gods eie ſhall not pitty him, as a poore ſervant that did as he was bidden; but ſmite him for an unfaithfull one, who did that which was unlawfull, as to breake the Sabbath or the like, to pleaſe a wretched Maſter: Even ſo I ſay on the other ſide, If thou haſt beene faithfull to God againſt a woſull Maſters commands, although hee can heere beare thee downe with perſon and greatneſſe, yet thou ſhalt be heard where perſon is not accepted, but the cauſe; and the Lord ſhall quit an innocent ſervant againſt an injurious Maſter. *Moſes* had a Law that no Judge ſhould favour a poore bad man in a caſe of evill, for his poverty: but then much more he had another, which forbad to accept the perſon of the mighty againſt the meane in caſe of unrighteouſneſſe.

2 King. 7. 8. Coloſſ. 3. 25.

Laſtly, the Lord will bleſſe thy righteouſneſſe of a ſervant, with fidelity in thy ſervants, when thou ſhalt governe. And as *Adonibezek* ſaid, the Lord had juſtly requited him for his cruelty; ſo many Maſters ill ſervanted, may ſay, the Lord juſtly plagues them with lewd ſervants, for ſince they were rude and unfaithfull, they never repented. Well is that ſweet coherence of the Centurions ſpeech to bee noted, I my ſelfe am under authority, and am ſubject; and what of that? God hath bleſſed me with ſuch as are obedient, come, goe, doe as I bid them and are at my becke. I might be endleſſe, there were comfort enough in this, if there were no more, that at the laſt day of reckning, when all ſervants ſhall be called *coram*; then ſhall that bleſſed and finall ſentence be pronounced upon thee, Come thou good and faithfull ſervant, thou haſt beene faithfull in a little, be ruler over much, enter into thy Maſters joy. God gives no leſſe then a Kingdome for the pooreſt, the leaſt duty of the meaneſt of his ſervants. Let thus much ſuffice for this uſe alſo, and ſo for this whole Doctrine.

Judg. 1.

Matth. 8.

Now ere I come to the next point in the text, I muſt not paſſe by the relation of *Naaman* to them, having ſaid ſomewhat of the ſervants towards him. Relatives goe together in nature, and therefore in handling: And as theſe ſervants performed the faithfulneſſe of ſonnes: So *Naaman* (by their owne confeſſion) was a father to them rather then a Maſter. Servants will be glad to heare me ſay ſomewhat of the fatherhood of Maſters, as well as of their faithfulneſſe, and it would not grieve any ſervant to be faithfull to a Maſter who is as a father. I will bring things to as narrow a point as I may. Maſters then muſt be fathers to their ſervants: Not onely ſo, in point of ſuperiority and reverence, to procure honour to themſelves, but in point of tender reſpect, care and love to the good of their ſervants, both ſouls and bodies. The Apoſtle having given ſervants their charge (leſt their Maſters ſhould beginne to overcrow them) preſently comes in, And ye Maſters doe the ſame things unto them, forbearing threatning, knowing that your Maſter is alſo in heaven, and there is no reſpect of perſons with him. For why?

Addition to the former doctrine.

Maſters muſt be fathers to their ſervants.

Eph. 6. 9.

1. *Reaſon.*

Firſt, they are under thy roofe, and have betaken themſelves under the

2 Kings

covert and ſhrowd of thy wings, they have left their parents, under whoſe protection they lived, that they might bee wholly (under God) for thee; reaſon therefore that thou ſhouldeſt be as a patrone, protector and father unto them. A ſervant may in a ſort, ſay to his Maſter, I am thine ſave me, for all things looke for ſupport from them to whom they belong.

Againe, thy ſervants are children to thee; their cloſe fidelity and denying themſelves for thy good, ſhould draw thine affection to be for them: True it is, ſervants are not as children in point of naturalneſſe and neereneſſe, for the child abides in the houſe for ever, but the ſervant only for a time; yet during that time, he pleades for fatherhood and regard from thee ſo farre as is meet. *Queſt.* But wherein ſtands this duty of Maſters toward them? *Anſw.* Briefly, in theſe things: Firſt, in a preparation. Secondly, in a performance.

1. Preparation. Behold God in thy ſervants duty. Gen.35.5.

Firſt, for the former: When thou ſeeſt that thy ſervants heart is ſubject unto thee, and that there is a reall awe and Religious feare of ſpirit put into him by God for thine advantage; and that (as it is ſaid of the Nations when *Iaacob* went to Luz) the Lord ſmites a trembling at the ordinance of government: Thy duty is to behold God in this worke, to ſee thine owne baſeneſſe, and to ſay, who am I, that thou ſhouldeſt ſubject the wills of men unto ſo ſinfull a creature as I am? It is not my worth, authority or carriage, which could claime that eſteeme and ſervice which my ſervants tender unto me: It is thou (O Lord) that ſubdueſt my people unto me! In me there is nothing, but might breed diſdaine and deſpiſing, as well as reverence: But thou haſt covered my uncomely parts, by the honour of thine ordinance! Oh! that this might draw my ſoule in ſubjection and awe under thee, who art the father of whom all the families of the earth are called: Oh that I could tremble at thy greatneſſe! Oh! that as thou hideſt from my cretaures their owne ſtrength and parts, that they might be wholly under mine authority; ſo I might remember, that I am under thee far more abſolutely, then a creature can be under mine: Oh! that I might not feele mine owne parts, ſtrength, wiſdome, welfare, but feele thy feare upon mine heart as a bridle to awe and to reſtraine me from any boldneſſe or looſeneſſe before thee: Lord, I never ſee awe and feare in my inferiours to me-ward, but preſently I conceive thou art in it to reflect a greater awe of my heart toward thy ſelfe. For every Kingdome and rule in this world, from a King to an houſholder, is under a greater: Oh! let not my ſervant riſe up in judgement and condemne me, in that hee could behold that in a ſinfull peece of fleſh which could ſubdue him, but I could never ſee that luſtre and glory, that mercy and love in thee, which ſhould draw and ſubdue my heart to thy ſelfe, and ſet thee up ſo therein, that my ſelfe might bee as nothing, that I might ſay, Whom have I in heaven but thee, or in earth like thee? By this meditation with praier, prepare thy ſelfe firſt, and then the duty will follow the better.

Eph.3.15.

Pſal.73.27.

2. Performance. 1. Yeeld fatherly reſpect to thy ſervant.

Secondly, having thus firſt given up thy ſelfe to God, give thy ſelfe alſo to the duty of fatherly and due reſpect to thy ſervants, and let not thine heart checke thee for any ſuch wilfull neglect of them, as might cauſe the Lord to puniſh it in thy ſelfe: Even thy very diet, lodging and

care

care of the body, muſt be good. Thy horſe thou wilt ſometimes attend buſily and carefully, becauſe thou wouldeſt have him ſerviceable and loath he ſhould faile thee; even ſo, looke what thou wouldeſt have thy ſervant toward thy ſelfe, that utter by the managing his ſpirit and framing of him for thy uſe. The Maſters eye makes the fat horſe, and his care the good ſervant. This generall branch out to thy ſelfe in theſe particulars.

Tender to him his ſhare in ſpirituall inſtruction.

First, be ſure, that as thou thy ſelf lookeſt daily, for the bread of the day from God, ſo tender thou (as thy ſervants ſteward) the (*demenſum*) or portion due to thy ſervant daily; let him ſhare in thine inſtruction, catechiſing and information in the Lord, with correction and reproofe, warnings and admonitions, encouragements and promiſes, let him not goe up and downe, ſhifting and graceleſſe, give him ſuch as the Lord hath given thee, with praier for bleſſing daily, and know, that this is as meete for him as his daily food or wages, better unfed then untaught. Truſt not thine owne wiſdome, but carry him in thine armes to God, and pray the Lord to waſh him, ſhave off his locks, and pare his nailes, to make him faithfull, to lay his hands upon him and bleſſe him, that ſo thou maieſt have a ſervant of the maker, purged and made uſefull for himſelfe and thee: When thou haſt him tyed to thee by Gods cords, he is ſafe. This whet every day will be no let unto thee.

Feed him by the eare and eye too.

Secondly, feed him not onely by the eare, but by the eye; pull not down that in practice, by an humorous, paſſionate, baſe and ungracious carriage which thou haſt ſet up in him by teaching; for this will make him loath thee and deſpiſe it: But tender unto him an holy, grave, and pure example; walke before him ſo, that Gods authority may appeare in thee: Stand not ſo much upon thy ſuperiority of fatherhood over him, as wiſdome and reſpect unto him. Above all (as *Salomon* ſaith) over heare not thy ſervant when he ſpeakes evill of thee, that is, let him ſee that thou art a man who can rule thy paſſions, for thy ſelfe canſt tell, that thou haſt oft offended God in that kinde. This convincingneſſe of thy carriage will breed invincible reverence and reflection of obedience toward thee againe. See that thy ſervant deſpiſe thee not: This will command reverence: Contrarily the heart of a ſervant will ſuggeſt thus; if thou walke baſely, what is matter how I ſerve ſuch a Maſter? What if I filch from him, neglect his worke, ſpeake evill of him and diſhonour him, runne away from him? It is good enough for him, God is juſt: But holy walking awes a ſervant, overpowres his heart, ſhames him, makes him bluſh and puts him to ſilence. This is powerfull not by violence, but by perſwaſion, both in ſight and behinde thy back.

Looke to thy authority.
1. In charges.

Thirdly, bee carefull both of thy authority in commanding and in practiſing. For the former, impoſe nothing upon thy ſervant, which the Lord hath not warranted thee by his word. Bee not ſo vile as to digeſt any thing, ſo thou maieſt have thy worke, and thy will done by him: Be thou thy ſelfe alſo under authority, and be a Maſter in the Lord. Thou haſt enough to anſwer for thy ſelfe, endanger not his ſoule alſo, to make thine account more grievous: Stretch not thy conſcience to pervert his, urge him not to breake Sabbaths, ſend him not upon errands that day (as if it were looſe and might be ſpared) fleece not from God; preſſe

2Kings

him not to make a lye for thee, to ſweare or forſweare for thy ſake, and the like, carry him not with the, to baſe, lewd companies, pleaſures, luſts.

2. For practiſe.

So for practice. Ye ſhopkeepers, let not your ſervants behold in you a ſpirit of covetouſneſſe, to obtrude bad wares for good, to belye their goodneſſe, to ſell for too great priſes, falſe weights, ſcant meaſures. Such ſcurffe will ſoke into them, as water into the bowells, and fret like a canker. The Divells market is ſo full as it is, by this tradition and exchange from Maſter to ſervant. This is not to be a father but a traitor; for a three penny commodity to betray a ſoule to hell, and (the whiles) to the like practiſe: Such ſtraked roddes laid before ſheepe, will cauſe them to bring forth ſpotted lambes. How many on the gallowes and more in hell, roare and cry out upon ſuch Maſters? Thy life ſhall goe for his, and he in hell groanes for thee to follow, without ſpeciall mercy and repentance. ſo much for this.

Impoſe lawfull commands in meaſure.

Fourthly, in the obeying of ſuch commands as are lawfull and currant, yet impoſe not tyranny in the meaſure thereof; both in the former and in this latter, ſervants may bee overloaden. When Maſters care not what exceſſe of toile and moile ſervants undergoe, and that out of ſeaſon beyond ſtrength, without due reſt, ſleepe or intermiſſion, they ſhew themſelves no fathers, (for fathers pitty their children) but oppreſſors. Thy ſervant is for thee to uſe, not tire or teare out: Thou muſt not take both fleece and fleſh too, So when that is laid upon the yong and ungrowne (in either ſexe) which belongs to ſtronger armes and ſhoulders to lift, or when a taske is impoſed, which exceeds the skill or experience of a ſervant, it is an exaction an overdriving of them, more fit for Egyptian taske Maſters, then Chriſtian governours: Take the ſervant in his way and element, it is beſt both for thee and him. So alſo let thy ſpirit be ſweet and eaſie toward him in his moderate labours, elſe thou wert better lay on more work. For the ſpirit of a Maſter, if inſulting, taunting, chiding, upbraiding, is more heavy and contrary to the ſpirit of an underling, then worke is to the body. A ſervant would not care what hee did for his Maſter, ſo he might have peace and quietneſſe. But a tyrannous ſpirit and wrathfull tongue with implacableneſſe, is a continuall wearineſſe and dropping to a poore creature. A loving interpretation, a tender compaſſionate heart, acknowledging with content, the diligence of an inferiour, is as marrow to the bones. Thou couldeſt not abide a froward curriſh ſpirit, a dogged ſervant, anſwering againe, croſſe and diſquieting of thee: Take heed then thou meaſure out to him by the ſame rule, whereby thou wouldeſt have him meaſure out unto thee. Awe him and rule him, ſpare not, and correct errors, yet with a fatherly heart and hand; but play not the *Reboboam* to his ſubjects, who cared not what meaſure he laid on, nor feared what they could requite him withall: His little fingers ſhould be heavier then his fathers loynes; but his fathers twelve tribes, turned to become his two tribes, and ſo the mends was in his owne hands.

1 King.12.

Encourage him ſometime.

Fifthly, if thou ſee thy ſervant extend and inlarge himſelfe for thy content beyond ordinary, conceale not his labour of love, for it is love and bounty of affection which cauſes him ſo to expreſſe himſelf: Elſe he would

would ſhrinke in and reſtraine himſelfe. Doe not therefore *Nabal* like, look another way and reject it, but ſee it, encourage and accept it, as thou wouldeſt have Chriſt doe thine. Sometime a little liberty of honeſt exemption refreſhing his wearineſſe, or a little overplus, a teſton or a ſhillings requitall, will do more then all violence. Somewhat hath ſome ſavour; and what a ſervant wouldeſt thou bee to God if thou hadſt all commands and no encouragements?

Yeeld him all due protection and ſhelter.

Sixtly, the Lord requires thy fatherly protection to ſhield and ſafeguard thy ſervant while he is in thy buſineſſe, that none moleſt, wrong or diſcourage him. The Lord promiſes to uphold us while we walke in his way: So muſt we under God protect ſuch as commit themſelves to our ſhelter. Much more then oughteſt thou to ſhew thy ſelf a father and friend in troubles and vexations by enemies, who purſue him in his eſtate or otherwiſe. Moſt of all, if the Lord lay his hand upon him either in minde or body. Moſt Maſters if they finde, that their ſervants grow ſad and ſorrowfull in ſpirit and loaden in conſcience, abandon them preſently, and are loath to endure the trouble, or to beare the loſſe of ſome little time of hearing the word, conſulting with the Miniſter, whereas rather they ſhould be meanes to provide counſell for them. So for body, if a ſervant be hurt, bruſed or lamed in our buſineſſe, or if otherwiſe, the hand of God be upon them, not to leave them to themſelves, but to fellow-feele their affliction, to be afflicted with them, and helpe to beare ſome of the burthen which they undergoe. God tries thee in ſuch a caſe, whether thou wilt take all his ſervice, but ſhake off all burden.

Carry an equall impartiall hand.

Seventhly, carry an equall hand betweene thy ſervants who deſerve well. It is a maine duty of the Maſter to regard thoſe moſt, that deſerve beſt: (for that will provoke the honeſt to emulation, and ſhake off the bad altogether:) But among the equally well deſerving, let not an unequall ſtreame of affection be carryed, and all kindneſſes goe to one as a favorite, and nothing to others, for that will breed heart burning and ill will, both againſt the Maſter, and amongſt themſelves, and much impeach thy wiſdome and government.

Reſpect them at departure.

Eightly, as thou muſt doe for them while they are under thee, breeding in them the knowledge and skill in thy trade, and the experience which thou canſt afford them; ſo at their departure after long and weary ſervice with thee, doe for them as their occaſions require of thee: The Jew though he were ſold as a ſlave for his time, yet at his diſmiſſion was to have a gratuity paid him, to beginne the hard world withall; either by lending him ſomewhat for a time to occupy, or to helpe him in his marriage, or by commending him to ſome better ſervice, or yeelding him any ſuch countenance or teſtimony as may advantage him. The worlds cry is no penny no *Pater noſter*, if once worke be done, let him looke us no more in the face. But the weldeſerving, require another carriage: Thy ſervant hath ſpent his beſt time with thee, therefore it were harſh altogether to neglect him in his decaying time. Let thy counſell and aide be ready for him if he deſire it, in token thou lookeſt at his deſerts, as much as thine owne ends. And ſo much for directions: Which if they were duly practiſed, how would they winne and draw the hearts of ſervants to their Maſters? What burthen would they refuſe for ſuch?

2 Kings

As the old men told *Rehoboam*, If thou ſhalt ſpeake kindely to theſe people, they will be thy ſervants for ever. *Naaman* here, is not for nothing called father by his ſervants, who are as thankefull to requite his reſpect: And the truth is, he might account the cure as wrought by their perſwaſion, under God and his Prophet. And ſtill I ſay as before, the fatherhood of Maſters, would breed childlike faithfulneſſe in ſervants, and doubtleſſe the many clamors of both ſorts againſt each other, by taking theſe counſells, would much what be ſtopped. And ſo much for this point alſo, added to the former by a neceſſary coherence: So much alſo for the firſt qualification of ſervants and Maſters faithfulneſſe and reſpect.

The ſecond thing in the perſons attempting: Their care for their Maſter with ſeaſonableneſſe and wiſdome.

Now followeth the ſecond thing to be noted in the perſons attempting, and that is their due behaviour of themſelves in the attempt making. Which I noted to conſiſt in a compound of ſundry vertues, eſpecially of wiſdome, tenderneſſe and ſeaſonableneſſe: I will not handle them apart but altogether; yet I would open them briefly for the better grounding of the doctrine.

The ground of the point opened.

And firſt, their wiſdome appeares in this, that they mix awe and feare with love, a due reverence compounded of both: Some would rather have diſcovered diſdaine of his folly and rage; but even in theſe humours of his, yet they bewray their reverence of him. Father is a notion made of feare and love. As if they had ſaid, your are our Maſter, we your ſervants; wee come now to treate with you in a caſe concerning your owne good; yet wee underſtand our ſelves to be inferiours, and that the perſon which we ſuſtaine will not beare any boldneſſe or ſawcineſſe: Let our words therefore be accepted, and wee ſhall thinke our paines well beſtowed: commonly men thinke reverence is ſuperfluous in the caſe of welwiſhing to others; we may be as bold and uſurping as we liſt: no, but even in this alſo, very great humbleneſſe and loyalneſſe is required.

Secondly, they are very tender, meeke and mercifull to their Maſters ſoule and preſent condition, and becauſe it needed ſome expoſtulating and conteſting (for the better piercing into him) ſo yet they ſaw, that his froward paſſion would not endure any harſhneſſe or ſharpeneſſe from them; and therefore they put on a meeke ſpirit, inſtead of (Maſter) call him (Father) ſugering the bitter potion they were to miniſter, they come with the heart of a Lion for courage and reſolution, to thruſt in the looſe joynt into his place, yet with the hand of gentleneſſe and ſmoothneſſe: Even as Chyrurgians muſt doe to broken bones. Wrath added to wrath, would have cauſed madneſſe: But this mildeneſſe brake the dint of it.

Thirdly, they adde ſeaſonableneſſe to both: Angry men we ſay, muſt be waited on till the humour is over: But now the caſe required preſent advice. For if their Maſter had ſet ſpurres to horſe, and made away homeward, who knowes whether any opportunity would have beene offered them to treate with him? But now while the Prophet was at hand, and the cure in ſome hope, it was their ſeaſon to ſtrike in with him, and to prevent future danger. Now therefore they rather chuſe to take their time, and to alay his wrath with much moderation of heart toward him, then to waite for the cooling of it while remedy was paſt. All theſe three

three come to one, that is a due and diſcreet behaviour in attempting to heale one who was diſtempered and paſſionate: If they had violently driven out one naile with another, and taken him to taske thus, Sir, you ſhew your ſelfe ſcarſe a man, not wiſe enough to ſee what buſineſſe you are about, you are mad with your owne ſhadow, and who ſhall be wiſe for one, who will needs play the foole againſt himſelfe? Wee for our parts, are reſolved to give you over, if you bee at this point, goe home hardly, and repent at leaſure, &c. Alas what had come of it! ten to one a further enraging of him, and a ſplitting him againſt the rocke of his owne paſſion, and making the diſeaſe incurable: This therefore they ſaw was no courſe to be taken with him, and therefore they melt him with mercy, rather then batter him with terror, ſaying, Father, if the Prophet had ſaid ſome hard thing, wouldeſt not have done? &c. They cover their expoſtulation with ſweet ſpeech, as one that would lap up a pill in the pap of an apple.

Doctrine. It is no eaſie taske to adviſe rightly in ſpirituall diſtreſſes.

The point then will be this, It is no eaſie taske for any, to encounter them aright who are in any diſtemper: or thus, To ſpeak to them that are diſtempered in ſpirit to any good purpoſe, is a worke of ſome difficulty. And as touching the ground of this point, out of the text it is evident, that it was difficult for theſe poore ſervants thus to encounter their Maſter. For (to ſay truth) it was none of their owne worke, but the Lords in them, who ſet them on. As is was ſaid of *Hophni* and *Phinees*, it was from the Lord that they ſhould not heare the counſell of their father, becauſe he meant to deſtroy them; and of *Reheboam*, it was from the Lord that he ſhould not heare the voice of his old counſellors, that ſo he might fall: So it was from the Lord that *Naaman* ſhould take counſell of his ſervants, not to turne away in a rage, but goe to Jorden and waſh, that ſo he might be healed; and therefore much more the meanes were from the Lord whereby this was effected. The Lord ſent them forth with meet furniture, and cauſed them to prevaile, which elſe would not have beene.

1 Sam 2.25.

1 King.13.

1. *Reaſon.*

For theſe three qualities of wiſdome, tenderneſſe and ſeaſonable fidelity are no common gifts either in ſervants or Miniſters or any others, for the redreſſe of the afflicted in ſoule and ſpirit. Every one will jangle and prate of them that are troubled; it is eaſie to play the fooliſh, the harſh and unſeaſonable counſellors; but wiſe, meeke and ſavoury counſell, is (as they ſay of truth) hidden deepe in the earth, and hardly digged out. I will ſay a word or two of the text, and then enlarge my ſelfe further to the point.

Amplifying of the point out of the text.

Firſt, for inferiours to encounter a ſuperiour, a Noble man & of great ſpirit, was a thing of ſome difficulty, eſpecially in ſuch a perverſe temper as he was in. Equals to equals, or ſuperiours to inferiours carry an hand of greater authority, then inferiours to their betters: Becauſe the ſpirit of the great ſoone riſe againſt the meane, as if they thought themſelves deſpiſed. And therefore the Lord forbids every one to meddle with the elder or ancient, by reproofe, but to exhort them as fathers; they will not eaſily beare it; they muſt heare of their fault by implication as *Naaman* here doth.

1 Tim.5.1.

And ſecondly, diſtemper is a kinde of ſuperiority of it ſelfe, becauſe it is

2 Kings

is lofty and proud. So ſaith *Salomon* Prov.21.24. Proud and hauty is his name &c. For the while, that a diſtemper laſteth, the verieſt underling thinkes himſelfe ſomebody, when as in truth he is leſſe then himſelfe: How much more then, when ſtate is joyned with it, as here? Diſtemper of ſpirit, lookes at no reaſon, arguments, carriage for the preſent: *Eliſha* himſelfe (in a lawfull diſtemper) yet being tranſported, was faine to call for a minſtrell; by the harmony of whoſe muſicke his ſicke ſpirit was a little brought to it ſelfe. This for the Text. But now for the generall, much more may be ſaid for the proofe and explication thereof.

2 King.3.15.

Proofes.

Take ſome Scriptures firſt, and then ſome Reaſons. See Act.9. *Paul* (then *Saul*) was in a deadly diſtreſſe of ſpirit after his caſting downe: the Lord bids *Ananias* ariſe and go to counſell him. But what ſaith *Ananias*? Oh Lord, I have heard ſay of this man, hee hath beene ſuch and ſuch a one, a perſecutor, blaſphemer! *q.d.* If he now be to be dealt with, it exceeds my ability. I know not, but he may doe me hurt for my love. No (ſaith the Lord) he is a choſen veſſell to beare my name, goe and be not afraid. Well, he went, and how doth he encounter him? Very mercifully and reſpectively: Even as *Naamans* ſervants here doe, alleniates his diſtemper, grates not upon his ſad heart, addes not ſorrow to ſorrow, oppoſes him not, upbraids him not for his former cruelties, qualifies his feares, eaſes him of thoſe aggravations of horror which had ſunke him, brought him to the cleare ſight of the promiſe, and mercifully reaches him out the hand, Brother *Saul* receive thy ſight both of ſoule and body. Was there not ſome difficulty in the harping upon the right ſtring, if God had not guided his hand? So *Paul* in the caſe of the excommunicate Corinthian, how wiſely, tenderly and ſeaſonably is he faine to carry himſelfe? He was at firſt, very violent with him: After, ſeeing how he humbled himſelfe, how wary he is, leſt he overdrive, and ſo put him into an extremity? Oh! ſaith *Paul*, he hath beene caſt downe ſufficiently; I dare not uſe mine office to deſtroy, but to ſave. Therefore rather comfort and encourage ſuch a one, then adde ſorrow to ſorrow! See Eſay 50.4. The Lord Jeſus was annointed by God his father, as with the oile of gladneſſe beyond meaſure; ſo in ſpeciall of Propheſie: The Lord God (ſaith he) hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I might ſpeake a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary. So ſaith *Iob*, or rather *Elihu*, Job 33. If an interpreter one of a thouſand be ſent unto him, &c. The worke of a man (who is one of a thouſand) is no common work. Read alſo *Elihu* his breaking in upon *Iob*, an ancient man, (himſelfe being yong) he comes in with his preface, to avoid envy, confeſſes his youth and unfitneſſe of himſelfe, to deale in the matter: But (ſeeing God had ſet him on) what doth he? He tells him, that he will not be as his three friends had beene, an accuſer and cenſurer of him, nor yet an excuſer of his errors and misbehaviour, but he would be to him an equall and impartiall judge, and as his owne ſoule, and as in the ſight of God hee would wiſh him to bee. No eaſie matter it is then to bee an *Elihu* to an afflicted *Iob*. *Paul* ſpeaking to *Timothy*, how a Miniſter of God ought to carry himſelfe toward the diſtempered, ſaith, He muſt not be prejudicate and raſh, but patient and long ſuffering towards ſinners, waiting if at any time the Lord will give them repentance to life. It is ſaid of the Lord Jeſus

1 Cor.6. with 2 Cor 6 7. 2 Cor. 11.29. 30.

2 Tim.2.

Eſay 42.3.

Jeſus, that hee was the beloved of God, in whom he delighted, and whom he qualified for the nonce to preach glad tidings, to relieve the poore priſoners and captives, &c. And what did hee? Surely he would not breake the bruſed reed, nor quench the ſmoking flax. His voice was not heard, he cried not in the ſtreets, he was a lambe, dumbe before the ſhearer. That is a moſt compaſſionate and tender helper, who by his owne afflictions, had learned to be full of ſympathy, and to be afflicted in all the afflictions of the people.

But I haſten to Reaſons. The firſt is this. It is no eaſie thing to carry our ſelves wiſely toward them who are but naturally diſtempered, as with wrath, diſcontent and paſſion, in common and outward reſpects; not onely if the parties be meerely carnall, but alſo although Religious. For anger is a madneſſe, and who ſhould deale with mad men? Doe they not thinke that their rage becomes them? Doth not the foole caſt arrowes and deadly darts, and ſay, he is in ſport? That is, doth hee feele or underſtand himſelfe to be as hee is? Who ſhould deale with a mad man who is ſo wiſe in his owne opinion, that for the time preſent he thinkes he can bee mad with reaſon? Thus was *David*, 1 Sam. 25. in the caſe of *Nabal*, he was ſo enraged, (thinking he had ſome cauſe of it) that without any more adoe, hee would needs command all his men to gird on their ſwords, and to diſpatch him and all his houſe, both guilty and innocent. And had not the Lord encountred him by a rare perſon, how hardly had he beene diſſwaded from his attempt? Well then, if meere naturall diſtemper of wrath be ſo hardly cured, how much more ſpirituall diſtempers, which lye farre deeplier ſeated in the ſpirit, and are of a farre more intricate nature? Such was *Naamans* here with *Eliſha*, though the diſeaſe were bodily. 1. *Reaſon*

Secondly, it appeares to be a difficult worke, becauſe it hath poſed the wiſeſt men to performe it well. Even one part of it is hard (and how much more all) I meane to diſcerne of the cauſe of the diſtemper. We ſee it in *Iobs* three friends, very wiſe men, and full of very ſage and profound divinity, yet in *Iobs* caſe meerely miſtaken, and tooke a falſe cauſe for a true; eſteemed him to ſuffer for his ſinne, when yet he ſuffered in his innocency. So we ſee that *Peter* diſcerned not the ſtate of *Simon Magus*, but thought him a beleever as others did, till afterward he diſcovered himſelfe. What ſhall we ſay of *Pauls* not ſeeing the ſtate of *Alexander*, *Demas* and others? If when the ſpirit of diſcerning flouriſhed in the Church, it were a thing of ſuch difficulty, how hard is it like to be in theſe times? 2. *Reaſon.*

Thirdly, this is much more true in ſpirituall caſes of conſcience, and that in two reſpects: Firſt, of the counſelling party. Secondly, the party counſelled. 3. *Reaſon.*

For the firſt, ſuch as are to counſell others doe rarely exerciſe themſelves in ſuch things as concerne this cure: They doe not judge it an equall object to their endeavours; thinking that it is ſufficient to ſtudy controverſies, or common places, or the text, and ſo be able to preach: But as for ſtudying caſes of conſcience, they deeme it needleſſe, they hope not greatly to need any experience in it, and they ſee it is tedious, requires a learning from heaven, alſo a very broken, ſelfe-denyed tender

Both in reſpect of 1. Them who give counſell.

1 Kings

der and mercifull heart: And beſides it requires a very life for the nonce to attend it, though a man ſhould doe little elſe, and a diverſion of a mans thoughts from his owne meere worldly affaires, ſeeking of many benefices, following ſutes, pleaſures, companies and liberties: Theſe men are loath to cut off for other mens ends; and although it be one of Gods maine ends, yet it is hard for a man to count Gods his owne, (eſpecially in this ſelfe-loving world) to priſe a ſoule according to the true worth of it, or to caſt our ſelves upon Gods requitalls, and ſet our labours upon his ſcore. This for the counſellors.

2. And alſo thoſe who take it.

Alſo for the parties counſelled, it is difficult. Partly, in reſpect of their diſpoſitions, and partly, their diſeaſes. For the former. The diſpoſitions of people in theſe caſes are ſtrange. For till there be no remedy, and till abſolute neceſſity and deſperateneſſe of ſtate compell them, men are very loath to make out, and diſcover what troubles them: They love to bite in their diſeaſes, and keepe them to themſelves, either through vanity, hoping they ſhall be better in time and ſhake off their diſtempers, (which yet rankle within them as feſtred ſores) and yet uſe no meanes. As ſome kinde of languiſhing ſicke folke are very hardly drawne to take phyſicke, till feare of death compell them, hoping that ſtrength of nature will overcome it, when yet the humour ſtill encreaſeth: Or elſe others doe it through a lazy irreſolute minde dallying and ſlothfull, not able ſeriouſly to weigh the danger they are in, nor the benefit of a well ſatisfied and quieted ſpirit. Others out of baſhfulneſſe and ſhamefaſtneſſe, loath to be troubleſome, or to bee knowne and obſerved. Others out of a vitious ſelfe-love, as loath to have their ignorance or ſelfe-love, corruption and unbeleefe, unprofitableneſſe, under meanes, or ſecret ſinnes and luſts to bee diſcovered and ſearched by the word, thinking it will coſt them more ſhame, ſmart and repentance then they are willing to undergoe. Others ſnared by the Divell, who buzzeth into them, that if once they enter into theſe liſts, they will never come to any reſt nor peace while they live; and thoſe that doe thus, doe it but in pride & humour, to ſeem troubled and get them a name, and theſe Miniſters doe no good to ſuch as come at them, but ſtill they live in as deſolate a ſtate as at the firſt, & that it is not in the power of men to helpe in ſuch caſes. Others thinke they muſt bee ſo engaged to ſuch as they adviſe with, that they ſhall never make them amends, with a thouſand ſuch crotchets, neither of any truth, nor import, ſave onely that their diſtempered hearts are proud and loath to yeeld to Gods way, through baſe eaſe and infidelity.

1 In reſpect of their diſpoſitions.

Loathneſſe to adviſe till neceſſity compell them.

Or a lazy irreſolute minde dallying with Gods ordinance.

Or vitious ſelfe-love.

Or ſecret ſins loath to bee ript up.

Or feare of too much engagement.

Beſides, many there are who although they doe come and breake through, yet have many baſe and ſiniſter ends therein. Some having onely a crafty meaning hereby to ſcrue themſelves into good eſteeme, and not to be counted of the common ſort, alſo thinking it may breed ſome advantage thereby, either for borrowing ſummes of mony or for gaining cuſtome to their ſhops and trades, or for commending themſelves to marriages, better husbands or wives then others, or ſuch baſe ends. And when they are defeated hereof, then they fall off and bewray themſelves. Others doe it, thinking withall to tell the Miniſter of their wants, that by this ſtirrop they may get into the ſaddle of their owne ends,

Or through ſiniſter ends. As credit and commodity.

Diſcontent if faile.

ends, to have mens eyes caſt upon them more publickly for releeſe and ſuccour. Others yet more baſely, doe ſo gull their owne conſciences, that although they know themſelves debauched and vile, yet if they can ſcrue into a Preachers affections, they hope their ſinnes may be better concealed; or if their conſciences doe accuſe them, yet by drawing the Miniſter to give them ſome comfort (upon their ſubtill informations) they may the better bear down their fears, and ſmother their checks. Others although they doe complaine honeſtly, and ſeeke out for conſcience ſake, yet are ſo ſullen, ſo froward, ſo difficult, ſo thwarthing, captious, and ſtill unſatisfied, that they turne the benefit of the ordinance to be a ſnare to them; grow more deepe into their objections, more ſtout and proud in the conceit of their owne diſtempers, that none can ſatisfie them, grow to affect multitude of counſellors, and to thinke none ſufficient to convince and adviſe them, and ſo make a worke of forty daies, a worke of their whole lives; and if melancholy be deeply joyned with their diſeaſe, they grow to affect their diſtempers, as if it commended them really, that they were ſo deeply troubled, and ſo make their afflicted lives a continuall dropping of miſery, except they can make their hell to ſeeme a kinde of heaven by cuſtome, which is worſe. Theſe I give but as a taſte of many more: This for mens diſpoſitions.

To conceale themſelves from the world.

To gull themſelves with falſe comforts.

Sullenneſſe and melancholy.

Now in the point of their ſeverall diſeaſes, the caſe yet is more and more difficult. And that both in point of true diſcerning, or kindely healing of mens diſtempers. As we ſay in the art of a Phyſitian, that the exact Theorique skill of judging diſeaſes, and the Therapeuticke of applying medicines, may well take up two mens lives: So I may truly ſay here, that theſe two skills in a Divine, may take up two mens gifts to handle well.

2. In reſpect of their diſeaſes.

For the former, it is hard to diſcerne of ſpirituall diſtempers wiſely; he is a bleſſed man that can doe it. Some lie ſo deepe and cloſe, that the parties themſelves cannot utter them, nor another eaſily perceive them. *Iobs* friends ſate three daies and three nights, looking upon *Iob* ſilently, for they ſaw the griefe was great and the diſeaſe intricate, both the outward and the ſpirituall; both were unuſuall, and the cauſe thereof was hard to finde: And when they began to pitch upon it, all were deceived in it by an uncharitable judgement.

1. Diſcerning them. Pſal. 41.1. Becauſe of their depth and cloſeneſſe.

Secondly, ſome lie in a perplexed confuſion, that is, there is an unhappy mixture of ſome bodily and ſome ſpirituall diſtemper in one, which it is hard to diſcerne whether is the others cauſe or effect: Now till the one be ſevered from the other, and the ſoule ſee cleerly what troubles it, looke what is ſpoken, is as water ſpilt upon the ground. For what availes it to lay an outward plaiſter upon a ſoule ſickneſſe, or to give ſpirituall counſell to a worldly ſorrow and a carnall malady? When the body is eaſed, then the ſoul ſtill remaines in her diſtemper, and never complaines. There is many one, that being rid of ſhame, poverty, enemies, bad husband or wife never complaine after. Againe oftimes there is a true ſpeciall diſeaſe, and yet through the diſtemper of the ſpirits by melancholy, the ſoule is not capable of counſell, through unſettledneſſe and fickleneſſe, which till phyſicke have removed, the ſoule cannot apprehend or retaine counſell. Againe, ſome are ſo weake and feeble minded, that they

2. By confuſion of cauſes bodily and ſpirituall.

3. Unſtableneſſe, &c.

4.

2 Kings 5.

they (through long cuſtome in their greefes) cannot well tell how to beginne or proceed in the mentioning of their eſtate. Others have confuſed legall terrors, ſo that all is not well with them, and yet they cannot directly ſay why? Perhaps they have beene indirecty wrought upon by ſome afflictions upon them in their bodies, children, wife or name, and this hath pinched them ſo farre, that their conſciences are toucht, and give in ſome reaſon againſt them from their owne guilt and ſin, yet not in a kindely ſort from the word convincing them, and killing corruption, or leaving them in caſe to heare of any remedy. Others are diſtempered in ſpirit, yet not from within, but without, the Divell mixing himſelfe with their fancy and thoughts, and ſo cauſing a diſtemper in the frame of their ſoules, as by hideous temptations about the Godhead, the Scriptures, the Ordinances, the Providence of God, &c. And ſometimes by heating the fancy, he diſturbeth the will with baſe deſires, and the ſenſuall appetite with odious luſts; when yet the ſoule of it ſelfe, is no cauſe hereof in ſpeciall.

6.

7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.

Some are troubled for their corrupt natures: Others for ſome peculiar corruptions or evills, inward or outward. Some are diſtempered about their Evangelicall diſpoſition, either about the condition of faith, the truth of it, the meaſure of it, or the roote whence it commeth; or elſe the worke of faith it ſelfe, the long delay between the one and the other, the holding under of their ſpirit by feares, by the difficulty of beleeving, by the hiddenneſſe of Gods decree, by the freedome of the ſpirits working, by the feare of death, ere the promiſe bee received; by caſting the unlikelihood of ever beleeving, or of caſting out ſome luſt that dogges them or of finall perſevering. Others are troubled about the truth of grace, Others the meaſure, Others the recovery of it after their revolts. In ſuch a multitude and variety of diſeaſes had not he need to be one of a thouſand, who ſhould diſcerne wiſely the ſpeciall caſe of a diſtempered ſpirit? Eſpecially when perhaps the ſpirit it ſelfe cannot cleerly judge of her own.

The applying of remedies hard.

Aud ſecondly, when the malady is perceived; yet the application of the remedy and the beating in of reſolution and ſatisfaction is not ſo eaſie. The cure of diabolicall temptation is contrary to the cure of our owne corruption: He that ſhould urge a poore ſoule to attend the one, or to ſhake off the other ſuddenly, might deſtroy it. There are peculiar remedies according to the diſeaſes; one ſalve and counſell cannot heale all ſores: oftimes there is neceſſity of ſtaying a man in an extremity, who yet may not be comforted. Againe, the objections of an unſatisfied ſpirit, are not eaſily anſwered, although perhaps the remedy be knowne. Want of experience or of tenderneſſe, or (as the caſe may be) of courage and boldneſſe, or too much haſte or delay in applying remedy, or want of ſome ſpeciall apt Scriptures to terrifie, or ſuch promiſes or examples as might ſpecially comfort are out of minde; and finally, the Lord is not preſent with every counſell, and ſo the cure waxes tedious, the patient impatient, the counſellor weary and diſcouraged. So much for the Reaſons. Now I come to the Uſes.

Vſes.

And firſt, I would beginne with one or two generall ones; the one touching the dealing with naturall diſtempers. The other touching the duty

duty of inferiours, when they are called to treate with their betters. For *Naamans* diſtemper (much what) was a carnall moodineſſe and rage: And the ſervants who encountred it, were inferiours, yet proſpered in their attempt, becauſe qualified for the purpoſe. 2 Kings

In the firſt reſpect, let it be Inſtruction, to all who have to deale with diſtempered paſſions, that they requite not evill with evill. Let the ſame minde be in us, which was in our Lord Jeſus: of whom Saint *Peter* ſaith, When he was reviled he reviled not againe, when he ſuffered, he threatned not, but committed himſelfe to him that judgeth righteouſly: And the like hath beene the practice of all Gods Saints, except (in ſome caſes we be compelled to anſwer a foole according to his fooliſhneſſe, leſt he encreaſe in his pride and rage, and ſo grow to implacableneſſe:) Thus *Ipta* handled thoſe proud Ephramites, who would be anſwered with no reaſon, but ſhewed that they came with proud and diſdainfull hearts to ſpeake deſperately in their wrath: When hee ſaw them more enraged with his equall anſwers, he fell to blowes and cooled their courage with ſlaying two and forty thouſand of them. And the truth is, none but dogged hearts and treacherous ſpirits will be incenſed by ſoftly ſpeeches. For the Lord hath appointed it as a quencher of the cauſe of wrath; Pride and Selfe are the matter and cauſe of this diſtemper, and that which kills theſe, kills the effect. Mildeneſſe and love will ſhame pride and put it to confuſion; and when an angry man ſees his wrathfull face and ſparkling eyes in a quiet glaſſe, he is aſtoniſhed and afraid of himſelfe; but if he ſee himſelfe in another which is like himſelfe he is enraged to try who ſhall ſhout furtheſt in the Divells bow. None ſave a *Judas* will be provoked with mildeneſſe: And therefore it is juſt, that ſuch ſhould be left to the fruit of their owne hands, to reape as they ſow: But uſually it is otherwiſe; and ſo have the Saints practiſed: Not onely ſuch as have ſtood in feare of the angry (as it ſtood *Abigail* upon to pleaſe *David* with faire words and with kinde preſents, becauſe ſhe ſaw him armed to make havoke) but even ſuch as had power to revenge themſelves. Thus *Gedeon*, when he could have ſerved thoſe Ephramites as *Ipta* after did, yet he choſe rather to appeaſe them by faire ſpeech. Alas ſaith hee! you ſhall not need to grudge me this victory; for what is my ſtrength and proweſſe to yours? And who knowes not *Ephraim* to be chiefe of the tenne tribes? Or what is the whole vintage of *Abiezer*, to the after gatherings of *Ephraim*? Oh this pleaſed them well! and ſo their fierceneſſe abated.

1. Inſtruct.
1. Branch. Anger muſt be pacified with meekeneſſe.
1 Pet. 2, 23.
Prov. 26. 5.
Judg. 12. 4.
An exception.
1 Sam. 25.
Judg. 8. 3.

So *David* when he had the advantage of *Saul* twice, both when hee was aſleepe and tooke away the pot of water from him and his ſpeare; another time when he cut off the lap of his garment and came after him, ſaying, I could have ſlaine thee this day, and inſtead of cutting thy lap, cut thy throate, but thy life was pretious to me. This for the time ſhaked his fury and wildefire; and although it could not wholly quench it, yet his end was moſt deſperate, as commonly theirs is, whoſe rage a calme anſwer and milde uſage will not qualifie.

1 Sam. 24. 4.

So *Iaacob* in his returne from *Laban*, foreſeeing *Eſau* his old grudge, ſets himſelfe in an exquiſite manner to appeaſe him; firſt, by gifts, then by great titles and humble carriage, whereby he turned off that rage

Gen. 33. 18.

2 Kings

1 Sam.25.18.

which elſe might have brake out, if hee had oppoſed him by violence. Oh! ſuch *Abigails*, *Davids*, *Gideons* and *Iacobs* are much wanting and almoſt out of the world! Now men have juſtled out Divinity, and made a mocke of it by their brave ſtomacks, maintaining that a man ſhall bee ſo much reputed amongſt others, as he reputes himſelfe and ſtands upon his tearmes; and he that puts up one wrong or reproach provokes two: And it is true, if we be ſuch indeed as ſtand to our owne and the worlds judgement and barre, appealing from Chriſts; we may take our courſe, goe on without let, till ſhame and repentance, and perhaps meeting with our matches doe compell us: But if Chriſts voice will prevaile, and wee will ſtand to his tribunall, hee hath told us plainly, ſuch cowards and white-livers we muſt bee, (and yet Chriſtianity makes us rather as bold as Lions in a juſt defence) if we will be his, read Matth.44.5. You heard them ſay of old (marke, revenge is the old Religion, though in a new cut) Thou ſhalt love thy friend and hate thine enemy, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, wrath for rage: But I ſay unto you (marke the voice of the new Goſpel of peace) love your enemies, doe for them that ſpite you, and ſpeake evill of you and hate you: Turne the other cheeke to him that ſmites you on the one cheeke. That thus you may be children of your father in heaven, who lets his raine and ſunne fall upon the ground of the bad, as well as the good. And this is the ſame with that of *Paul*, Rom. 12. If thine enemy hunger, thirſt or be naked, give him meate, drinke and cloathing, thus heaping hot coales upon his head, recompencing evill with good.

Rom.12.

And leſt ye ſhould think there is one Divinity for plaine folke, and another for Courtiers, Gentlemen and brave ſparkes of hot and noble bloud; looke (I pray) upon *Eliſha's* Divinity which hee brought to *Ieroboams* Court; when he had brought the Aramites blindefold to Samaria, hee askes them, My father ſhall I ſmite them? But the Prophet anſwers, No, ſmite them whom thou takeſt in the warre, kill not in coole bloud, ſet bread and meate rather before them and feaſt them, and ſo ſend them home to their Maſter, and ſo he did, and the bands of Aram came no more that yeare. It was good policy and Religion too. And no doubt but many of our braving and lofty ſtomacks, when they have met with the affronts of them whom they have provoked (as commonly boaſters alway goe by the worſe) then they wiſh they had beene wiſer and held in their ſtomack ill afterward: But I doubt many of our challengers and duellers, if they were put upon the enemy in a pitcht battell, and in Gods way, would prove like thoſe ſparkes ſpoken of in Judg.9. I meane *Gaall* and his brethren, who asked, who is *Abimelec?* But when they ſaw him, their hearts fainted, and they were beaten downe.

2 King.6.21.

To conclude, let this generall Inſtruction (brethren) reach to all ſtates, perſons, occaſions: Let the word dwell in us plentifully in all wiſdome to guide us in our courſe. The word is, anſwer not a foole in his folly, leſt thou be like him. The patient man is better then he who is haſty in his ſpirit and in his matters. He that overcomes himſelfe, is better then he that overcomes a City. Be ſlow to ſpeake, and ſlow to wrath. Here be the rules. If the former examples of Saints perſwade not thereto, let the practiſe of theſe heathen ſervants, ſhame and upbraid us: You

Eccleſ.7.8. Rom.12.19.

hus-

husbands and wives, remember Satan is alway at your elbow, if he can diſtemper you, quickly will the whole houſe be diſtempered and out of frame, and your examples will fret like a canker.

Doe therefore as wiſe *Abigail* did to drunken *Nabal*, (for drunkenneſſe and rage are both madneſſe) ſhe gave way to him while hee was in his cups and in his jollity of feaſting, but next day when wine was out, and wit in, ſhe told him of his baſe diſtemper, and then he was tame. So do not take your husbands or wives weapon out of their hand ſuddenly to wound him or her. If one rage, let the other pray and be innocent, perhaps the Lord will do thee good for their wrath. Conſider each other, the party in coole bloud, conſider of the other party, as of a man in drink, prevented by his paſſion that maſters him: Doe not now adde oile to the flame, and drunkenneſſe to thirſt: But remember, now God tries me! Theſe words are as ſtinging as fiery darts, this tongue is ſet on fire by hell, but now doth the Lord vex every veine in my heart to ſee what mettall I am made of: If now I liſten to my luſt and outſhoot the Divell, I may ſet a marke upon my ſelfe and be aſhamed: but if I can poſſeſſe my ſoule with patience now, and keepe my fort ſtrong, I ſhall ſhew my ſelfe a man, or woman ſtronger then a conquerour. I will deny my ſelfe therefore and take away anger from mine eyes, and diſtemper from my heart: I will ſeaſonably give over ſtrife leſt it become as a fire broken out, or as the barres of a Palace. Better ſo, then let your ſhames breake out to others, and ſo be faine to put your quarrells to arbitration, and then your ſelves ſhall be the firſt that repent it. The like I ſay to you all, brethren, in your worldly dealings and controverſies, or in thoſe tetches which you take each at other. Breake not out to open words of defiance (upon meer conceits) but weigh the reports, perhaps they come from talebearers, examine your grounds, and although you finde truth in them, yet ſee what conſtruction they will beare; conſider that the ſpirit that is in us luſts after envy: If theſe reports will not beare a good cenſure, yet coole your hearts firſt, then debate the quarrells in coole bloud before witneſſes, if the fault be proved, let it be ſufficient that he is convinced; but let not words, blowes and ſutes follow, as if you were heathens! Oh ſaith one! Shall I endure ſuch a baſe fellow to overcrow me? No, hee ſhall well know I am a better man then himſelfe ere I have done with him: Oh earth, earth, earth, heare the word of the Lord! Abate thy heart, abaſe thine heart, and doe as he did, who meeting his enemy who had ſought his life when he could have cruſhed him, entreated him to bee friends and brake his heart! doe thou ſo and proſper.

Luke 21.11.

Eccleſ. 11.10.

Jam. 4.4.

Humfrey Mumouth.

Touching the ſecond point of inferiours attempting ſuperiours, let this caution be obſerved from *Naamans* ſervants, that we wiſely obſerve what our perſons will well beare and admit. Inferiour mens ſway and ſtroke will goe but a little way with ſuperiours. The meanneſſe of the one and the prejudice of the other will be barres. Yet ſo it may fall out that neceſſity may put ſome calling upon an inferiour, as when there be no ſuperiours or equalls preſent, when ſilence would embolden the offender much, when the glory of God lies at the ſtake unavoidably, and eſpecially when the grace of the reprovers wiſdome may be like to overmatch both his owne meanneſſe and the others ſtoutneſſe. Otherwiſe

2. Branch. Inſtruction. Inferiours dealing with ſuperiours, muſt wiſely obſerve what their perſons will beare.

2 Kings

there had need be great caution leſt inferiours rather run themſelves into the ſuſpition of ſawcineſſe, receive great affronts and diſcouragements, (if not wrongs) from the reproved, leſt alſo the offender be more hardned in his ſin, and the ordinance with the fruit of it be diſhonoured and unprofitable. But (to returne) if God doe intimate to the ſpirit of any wiſe inferiours that they ought to reprove, then let them ſuſpect their owne perſons, and beware that they make no open conteſtation, but bee content with privacy, where no affront may be given before witneſſes, eſpecially let it be carried with great aloofeneſſe, and rather with inſinuation of an error, then taxing openly, exhorting rather to a contrary duty, then reproving the fault downeright: Rebuke not an Elder, (not onely a Miniſter, but a ſuperiour in any eminency) but exhort him as a father. Otherwiſe if God afford not diſcretion and opportunity, better is a warranted ſilence, and commending the cauſe to God with ſome item of a grieved heart, then a raſh venturing and ruſhing beyond our bounds. But to bee ſure, let all lenity bee uſed, all poſſible acknowledging of their places, yeares, worth and worſhip, give them all their due, both titles and praiſes to the uttermoſt, that it may appeare, the reprover is ſo far from preſumption, that were it for the meere regard of the offenders ſoule, the glory of God and the diſcharge of conſcience with peace, the reprover would much rather have choſen ſilence, then to attempt reproofe, and ſo leave the iſſue to God. So much for this ſecond.

A caution.

1 Tim.5.1.

I come now to the Uſes, ariſing in ſpeciall from this example of the ſervants wiſe and loving carriage towards their Maſters ſpirituall diſtemper. And firſt, if it be ſo difficult a worke to eaſe a diſtreſſed ſpirit: Let all ſuch as have obtained this mercy from the Lord, know, that they have met with no common mercy. It is a peculiar favour to enable the Miniſter to ſpeake a word in ſeaſon to a wearied ſoule: But how much more for the ſoule to find the word, and to feele it to be ſo? Inſtruction to the heavy hearted, is not as the gift in the hand, which *Salomon* tells us, proſpers whitherſoever it goes, and carries a commanding power with it. No: To ſpeake to the heart is Gods worke, whoſoever be the inſtrument; and none can create the fruit of the lippes, ſave onely hee that firſt created and formed the body of the earth, and breathed into it the breath of life. We Miniſters may ſpeake to the eare, diſcerne and adviſe, urge, anſwer doubts and convince, but the ſpirit of grace which annointed the Lord Jeſus to bee the Prophet of his Church, can carry thoſe words into the ſoule, and caſt them there as ſeed, and give them a body and being; altering ignorance, doubting, feares, deadneſſe, bondage, inſenſibleneſſe, infidelity, heavineſſe, into light, reſolution, hope, life, liberty, feeling faith and comfort. He that ſaid, lift up thy voice as a trumpet and convince my people of their ſinnes: and againe, Comfort ye my people, comfort them at the heart; meanes not, that we ſhould pierce into and reach the heart (for we cannot get to it) but that we bee the meſſengers of peace and glad tidings: God onely muſt by his Spirit convince, Joh.16.9. and he onely can carry conſolation through thoſe manifold turnings and crooked windings of the ſoule, even home and cloſe to the heart rootes. He onely can ſay, My doctrine ſhall droppe as dew, and as the ſmall raine wetting at the roote. Therefore whoſoever thou

Uſes of the ſpeciall fact of the ſervants.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction.

Proverb.

Eſay 57. The ſetling of a diſtreſſed heart by counſell, is a mercy highly to be priſed.

Deut.32.1.

thou art, here in this audience whom ever the Lord hath cauſed to breake through the hoaſt of diſcouragements, and to conſult with the Miniſter, ſincerely aiming at the true ends of counſell, and hath alſo met with thy ſpeciall diſeaſe, ſpoken to thy heart ſo, that it hath gotten a reall bottome out of the word and promiſe, for the ſole of her foote to reſt upon againſt feare and doubting: Oh! learne to priſe ſuch a favour above all treaſures. 2Kings

Eliſha was ſent but to one leper, as many as there were in Iſrael; and did not he eſteeme that priviledge? Let the 15. 16. and 17. verſes witneſſe for him: So the Miniſter of God goes to hundreds of ſicke and afflicted ones: But perhaps he is ſent in the ſpirit of counſell and ſealing up of peace through pardon to a very few: It is their portion to whom it pertaines; thoſe muſt partake it who can receive it, and only ſuch can be thankefull. What is the cauſe why we comfort ſo many through the ſeven yeare, of whom perhaps wee heare no more againe ever after? Our feete are not beautifull to the moſt of them; they never imbraced the power of truth, they deſpiſed the counſell of God for their ſalvation, and the conſolations of God ſeemed ſmall things unto them: They have got that they came for, a kinde of ſtopping of their outcries of conſcience, their wounds are kept ſweete and doe not rankle (as they thinke) they can now follow their buſineſſe, and goe about the world at their pleaſure, pleaſing themſelves with that the Miniſter hath ſaid unto them: And that no man ſhall pull from them, for it pleaſes them well to heare themſelves to be under the condition of grace, that faith belongs to them, that the leaſt deſire of faith is faith: But alas! They are comforted all at once, their comfort growes not as their doubts grow, they are not unſatisfied in ſeeking it, they are not afraid to deceive the Miniſter about their condition, and ſo deceive themſelves: But a dead comfort they are content withall, and if any call it into queſtion, they ſtoppe his mouth with this, the Miniſter of God comforted mee with ſuch and ſuch texts. But oh thou beaſt! It appeares ſince by thy baſe and common courſe that the Miniſter of God was deceived in thee, thy gloſing and ſemblance of ſorrow, thy ſelfe-loving complaints, and deſires, and thirſtings, deceived him, and thy ſelfe alſo. Were that Miniſter to conferre againe with thee, upon due knowledge of thee, he would profeſſe thou deceivedſt him and thine owne ſoule much more; for hee never comforted thee otherwiſe then upon ſuch conditions as thou never hadſt: But I digreſſe too much.

In all theſe reſpects I ſay, who ever thou art who canſt unfainedly ſpeak it, that God by the Miniſter hath met with thy ſinne, humbled thee for it, let in ſome glimpſe of mercy to ſtay thee for a time; not ſuffered thee to reſt there while thou couldeſt ſee how that light encreaſed as the day, and how it bred in thee ſuch affections, as brought thee to ſettle upon the free and eternall ſatisfaction of Chriſt for pardon and peace: I ſay, in what poore meaſure ſoever theſe have beene wrought, yet thou haſt felt ſcales to fall from thine eyes, deadneſſe from thy heart, and grace to enter by degrees, till thou ſaweſt cauſe to reſt in ſome ſort upon the naked love of the promiſer: Thou haſt infinite cauſe to bleſſe God all daies of thy life. I will not now bid thee beware of forgetting Concluſion.

2 Kings

Gal.2.

the Minister of God, and passing him by as a stranger (as hypocrites do) for thou shalt prise him above the parents of thy flesh; doe otherwise if thou canst, he shall bee so deare to thee, that thou shalt pull out thine eies to doe him good, yea esteeme him as one of a thousand; and there shall be a perpetuall ascent of praises to God from thine altar, it shall smoke continually; and although thine edge may blunt, yet thy metall of admiration and thankes shall abide for ever. Consider tenne miscarry to one that prospers by counsell; they returne to their old sloth, ease and distempers, they relapse to their worldlinesse, selfelove, and lie under a clod; If then thou hast beheld the wisdome, and savoured the good of the ordinance, try thy selfe throughly, as touching the fruit it hath wrought in thee, take not glasse for gold, and pebbles for pearles, be sure the Lord have thee in a cord surely bound to him, for playing the starter and timeserver (as most doe) and I say, give over the Lord if thou canst; But surely while these coales are in thy bosome thou shalt be burnt, and as long as thou hast this treasure about thee, thou canst not, wilt not chuse but bee exceedingly thankefull and cheerefull. So much for this.

Vse 2.
Admonition.
1. Branch.
Ministers must not count this a slight worke.
2 Cor.1.
Esay 50.4.

Secondly, let it bee a speciall caveat to Gods Ministers, is it so choice a peece of worke, to speake a word in season to a heavy heart? Doe not imagine the art of that to bee so easie (as most Ministers doe) the worke whereof is so difficult, and the fruit whereof is so pretious! Thinke it not a small thing to be a Minister of reconciliation. *Paul* saith, God hath made him meet for it, hee had comforted him, that by his consolation hee might comfort others. A tongue of the learned is no easie matter to come by. Once an holy man in this Church, after long labours in the Ministery (though contrary to some mens judgement) thought it meet to leave his charge, to betake himselfe to the worke of speaking a word to the weary; as seeing it to be a full work, & great use of it, & finding himself fitted. I would not advise any to do so, (whom God holdes in) but I would have none (of what parts soever) to thinke this an easie gift; such an one as will flow from the meere habit of his understanding, studies of Divinity, or paines in preaching alone: Discerning of leprosie was a peculiar skill of the high Priest. So this is a speciall gift by it selfe, obtained by study of thine owne heart, acquaintance with the infinite windings and subtilties of it, by much selfe-deniall, much strife in applying the promise: Also much experience is required to judge aright of the states of the distressed, much reading and through acquaintance with the Scriptures, much meditation and conference, much praier both ordinary and extraordinary must prevaile with God for it; yea commonly it is the gift of such as have beene much buffeted with temptations, humbled and tozed under Satan and their owne corruptions; such as have wrastled much with the Lord for a blessing, and halted upon it, that they might not be puffed up, but learne to be willingly under infirmity. I say, it is the gift, for the most part, of such as have laboured to destroy their sense and reason in and by faith and the promise, holding the realnesse of it from the truth of the promiser, whatsoever flesh say to the contrary.

M.R.G.

Read Levit. from the 12. to the 15.

Helpes to enable a Minister to it.

Yea it requires great love, a meeke and tender heart, burning with the weake

weake, to be all in all for Gods ends, loſing our owne in his, and cleaving to the worke for Gods cauſe unweariedly, againſt diſcouragements whatſoever. I exclude no other learning, arts, tongues, for a Divine, but for this part of Miniſtry, I ſay, there is another courſe to be taken for it. Alas! who ſhould wonder that there ſhould be few counſellors (under the Lord Jeſus whoſe office it is, Eſay 8.) of diſtreſſed ones? Nay, that in ſtead of comforters, there ſhould bee ſo many diſcouragers and miſerable comforters? Alas! there are few that taſte the method which I have ſpoken of. If it were but this one thing alone, it might eaſily reſolve us of this wonder, even to think how few there be who diſcerne aright of ſoul diſeaſes, or the eſtate of the poore, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks! How eaſie is it to be cheated by the cunning tricks of baſe hypocrites, who come onely to ſerve their owne turnes? How had blinde *Ahija* been deceived by *Ieroboams* wife, but for God? 1 King 14. 4. 5. I profeſſe of late there came to my ſelfe a drunken companion for comfort! and if God had not ſpecially armed me beforehand, and diſcovered his ſpirit, I might have beene deceived in him, and when he was gone, hee reported me to be uncharitable! But all that knew him, knew that he ſlandred me! Who is ſufficient for theſe things? If God keepe the ſtate of a poore ſoule from us (as *Eliſha* ſaid of the Shunamites dead child) how ſhall we ſpeake to the purpoſe but patter? 2 King. 4. 27. How many worthy and wiſe ones have beene miſtaken? (for I ſpeake not of ſuch as will thruſt themſelves upon the worke, when they want all manner of meetneſſe, and ſo will goe through ſtitch and ſay ſomewhat, though to the banning and perverting of the parties, rather then the ſetling and comforting) How hard is it often to judge of ſorrow, whether it bee worldly or godly? Have not both as deepe pangs one as other? And although it be ſpirituall, yet how hard to diſcerne ſorrow comming from the terrors of the conſcience, or ariſing from the hope of the Goſpel? How eaſie is it, out of a preſent merciſulneſſe of heart to one in trouble, to goe raſhly to worke, and to apply plaiſters to a freſhly bleeding wound?

How many loaden wretches with the guilt of their daily revolts and lewdneſſe, come roaring to a Miniſter for eaſe, meerly from an horror of heart, no way deſirous to bee broken off from their courſe in evill, but onely from the hell of their conſcience, which if they were rid of, they would returne to their vomit worſe then ever? Who would thinke bleeding at the arme, would ſtanch bleeding at the noſe? That is, that it were a medicine for ſuch a one to bee drawne into more true horror by the word, for ſinne as it is ſinne: And yet no other remedy will eaſe ſuch a one: Who is able to diſcerne diabolicall injections (which may be perceived by the unnaturalneſſe, hideouſneſſe, dogging and pertinacy of them, and the like,) from evills of our owne wilfully committed and polluting the ſoule? For why? Both may ſeem to cleave to the ſoule, the one as faſt as the other. And ſo I might bee endleſſe. I ſpake of a great many of theſe difficulties in the third Reaſon. Is it then an eaſie thing to ſpeake a word in due ſeaſon to one that is weary? No doubtleſſe.

I conclude therefore, let it be a caveat to all Gods Miniſters whom this worke concernes, as not to put it off, (being one of the maine peeces of

2 Kings

of our calling) ſo neither to ruſh upon it ſuddenly and without due preparation: uſe thoſe directions before named, and joyne this laſt, to ſeek of God a wiſe diſcerning ſpirit, (for that gift is not wholly abſent from the Church) to put a difference betweene things that differ: Which meanes being uſed, and love ſetting all on worke as the chiefe mover, it ſhall not be difficult to doe that in time and years, which perhaps at firſt ſeemed hard. God will bleſſe experience, and make this yoke (for ſo it is to the fleſh) eaſie, and this burthen light. I would have come to the other branch of the caveat to the people. But time cuts mee off: muſe the while of theſe, and we ſhall proceed to the reſt the next time, if God will. Let us pray &c.

The end of the Eleventh Lecture.

THE

THE TWELFTH LECTVRE
Still continued upon this thirteenth VERSE, &c.

VERSE XIII.

And his ſervants came neere, and ſaid unto him, Father, if the Prophet had bid thee doe ſome great thing, wouldeſt thou not have done it? How much more then, when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh and be clean?

VERSE 14. *Then Naaman went downe and dipped himſelfe ſeven times in Iordan, according to the word of the man of God, &c.*

Could not (brethren) the laſt Lecture, finiſh the point of the Religious ſervice done by theſe ſervants to their Maſter; wherein I obſerved the qualification of their perſons with love and lenity, to adviſe him for his good. I have opened the doctrine already at large, and made ſome generall Uſes, and ſome in ſpeciall. The laſt was Admonition to the Miniſters, with the which I have done. The next followeth now, as God ſhall guide us: Concerning both Miniſters and people, and that is exhortation: Therefore (brethren) if the worke of ſpeaking to the weary ſoule bee ſo difficult: Firſt, let me ſpeake to you that are to be comforted, and to receive inſtruction by the Miniſter of God. And the thing to which I exhort you in generall is, that both you beware leſt feare or ſinfull ſhame hold you off from counſell, and then that ye fitly apply your ſelves to the advice of the Miniſter of God, not to hinder, but to further the worke of your owne ſoules. If a man that hath a bone out of joynt could helpe the arme of the Surgeon (who wants ſtrength) to thruſt it in againe; how gladly would he aſſiſt him in ſo hard a worke, rather then by his wilfulneſſe abide long in his paine? The miſery of a ſoule out of joint

The people muſt beware leſt they turne away from counſell of their Miniſters.

2Kings

joint, and of a conſcience wounded, farre exceeds all bodily paine, and all the skill of a bodily cure: How then ſhould wee frame and accomodate our ſelves as by praier, ſo by all other meanes, to the skill of ſuch as God hath given us to be ſpirituall fathers, and to be reſtorers of us being out of joint?

Firſt, therefore (brethren) let me adviſe you ere you goe to any counſellor, goe to God to plant and ſet your hearts aright to receive counſell. Gal. 6.1. It is ſaid, in Zachar. 5.4. that the lampes which were to bee repleniſhed with the oile dropping from the olive branches by Gods providence, were ſituated ſo aptly under the dropping bowes, that none of the oile dropped beſide, but all fell upon the lamps underneath & fed their lights. So would the Lord have all who goe for advice to his Interpreters; hee would have them carry hearts well planted, wiſe and tractable to receive what is put into them.

Perhaps ſome may wonder at that I ſay, conſidering how hard it is for a ſad and diſtempered ſpirit to come with moulds ready to receive the molten mettall of Gods promiſes to bee faſhioned and formed thereby: But my meaning is, that whatſoever their diſtemper bee, they would ſtrive by all means for ſuch a calm, equall and teachable ſpirit, as may be ſubject to counſell when it is afforded them out of the word; otherwiſe they reſiſt the ends of the ordinance. For why hath the Lord appointed the gift of counſell ſave to ſettle and ſtabliſh the weak? The Miniſter (I doubt not) being wiſe, may both ſupply the office of liquor and veſſell alſo, counſell I meane, and an heart to receive it, if God fit him for it. But the worke will be the ſooner at an end, if all ſuch corruption as wilfully cleaves to the diſtreſſed ſpirit be firſt removed.

1. Counſell. Therefore firſt, let all ſuch goe to God by praier and acquaint themſelves with him, and him with their wants, beſeeching him who is the eternall counſellor, to order their unquiet and unſetled ſpirits, to ſeparate all carnall and worldly diſtempers, paſſions, ends and reſpects from them; to ſhew them how to picke out an end out of the ravelled skeine, and cleerly to diſcover the malady unto them: To take away all ſuch miſtakes and errors from them, as might cauſe them to miſconceive their eſtate and to thinke it other, better or worſe then it is, and to ſeparate the precious from the vile, that is, the worke of his owne convincing ſpirit, from the worke of their owne rebellious nature, their diſcontent, their ſullenneſſe, melancholy, feares and other extremities that cleave unto them: Alſo that he would ſhew them what hee hath done for them already, that they may not provoke him by unthankefulneſſe, and what is yet to be done, and at what eſpeciall knots and objections they ſticke, what their chiefe barres and lets are which moſt hold them downe; and if they cannot feele themſelves rid of theſe confuſions of ſpirit, yet that the Lord would take away that wilfulneſſe of ſtomacke, that croſſeneſſe, that waywardneſſe, which makes their diſeaſe ſo ranckle in them, and ſend them to ſeeke advice, with a minde deſirous to ſubject it ſelfe to God and to his ordinance, and to mourne when it cannot, being held in the chaines of it owne horrors or rebellion.

And ſecondly, let them commend the enterpriſe in hand to God for ſucceſſe; that the Lord would bee pleaſed to diſpoſe of the underſtanding

ding of him that is to adviſe them, that he may bee as from God unto them like *Elihu*; that he may diſcerne of their complaints, rectifie their errors, meet with their corruption, ſhew them their ſtate and wants, and comfort them at the heart as God allowes them: That if they cannot at the firſt finde ſtay and ſupport, yet (if they ſee but a little light at a crevis) they may be glad of a little and not be diſmaid; that they may ſeeke ſtill after counſell, till the worke by degrees be perfected: that they may not lay ſtumbling blocks in their owne way to fall by; but hold the meaſure of light (ſo farre as they are come) waiting till God reveale the reſt, and not defiling their conſciences the whiles, and ſo make the worke new to beginne. Phil. 3. 15.

Thirdly, that the Miniſter of God may be wiſe as an Angell of God, as well to find out apt and meete Scriptures to encounter the ſoule, (as the need thereof requireth) either threats, or promiſes, or other ſentences; and when they ſee that theſe are urged not by the authority of a man, but of God, (whom they only muſt look at in this caſe and not man) that then their baſe hearts may no further kick, cavill and gainſay, and ſo put the Miniſter of God to a double toile, not only to conflict with their reall diſtreſſe, but alſo with their wilfull and accidentall ſullenneſſe, pride and rebellion.

Fourthly. let them crave of God a wiſe utterance of their eſtate to the Miniſter of God or at leaſt an inckling thereof, that it may not be miſtaken; for a crooked rule being put into a mans hand, will force him to make a wrong line, though his skill be good enough to draw a right one.

Fifthly, chuſe thee out a faithfull interpreter, one of a thouſand, for love, lenity, skill, patience, long ſuffering, bowells of compaſſion and experience: For ſuch a mercury is not made of every blocke; thou maiſt elſe light on miſerable comforters.

Sixtly, above all other things, let ſuch perſons beware of any baſe motive or principle, leading them to aske advice; let them not affect any ſiniſter reſpects, nor aime at any baſe ends; to bee noted for zeale, to thinke themſelves ſafe, becauſe they have taken counſell, to choake and ſmother the accuſations of conſcience, to make them bolder in ſin, to pretend and alledge the counſell and comfort of ſuch a Miniſter, to harden themſelves againſt any juſt reproofes which after may bee urged upon them, and the like baſe ends, whereof the bouget of mans vile heart is fraught and full, eſpecially in this formall crafty age, wherein every one will be Religious, and Satan transformeth himſelfe into an Angell of light. For by this meanes that uncleane ſpirit will returne with ſeven worſe then himſelfe and defile more dangerouſly: But let thy aimes in this worke be honeſt, ſimple and ſincere, to goe forward with God according to thy light cheerfully and humbly, and ſo looke to proſper.

2. Branch to Miniſters. 3. Things. Abhorre error and prejudice. 1. Error.

Secondly, for the Miniſter of God; let him be exhorted alſo, firſt, to caſt out all bad principles perverting the ſpirit of counſell, and croſſing the gift of reſtoring the weake. And theſe are firſt, a prejudicate ſowre heart enclined to ſiniſter thoughts of the afflicted; conceiving them according to carnall reaſon, and not diſcerning the worke of Gods ſpirit in ſuch. This is no common grace to have a cleere ſpirit this way. For the ſpirit that is in us luſts after envy. We are all a kinne to old *Eli*, who ſeeing

2 Kings

1 Sam.1.13. 14.

2. Error.

3. Error.

4. Error.

seeing poore *Hanna* ſitting ſad, with her lippes moving and no voice, thought her drunke: But when he perceived her to bee a woman of a troubled ſpirit, powring out her ſoule from a full heart to the Lord, and underſtanding the cauſe, he became a Prophet of God unto her, for her ſatisfaction and comfort. Beware therefore of a baſe heart of prejudice, error, miſpriſion, raſhneſſe. (And yet take heed alſo that love and pitty, make us not too haſty in comfort.) Alſo eaſe, unmercifulneſſe, unbeteamingneſſe, ſullenneſſe, uncharitableneſſe, wearineſſe, and loathneſſe to be enlarged in our bowells, as the Lord allowes us, of which diſeaſe *Ionah* was ſicke. Alſo waſpiſhneſſe, ſuddenneſſe and haſtineſſe; whereby as Phyſitians cutting off their patients in their complaints they are impatient to heare, and ſo diſcourage them. I confeſſe that the talkatives and vanity of many weake ones in their complaints, (who in ſtead of inclining their eare and hearing, that their ſoules might live are ſwifter to jangle, & to neglect that which which is ſpoken, then to marke) and have never done with idle repetitions, may ſometimes cauſe a wiſe counſellor to chide and reprove them juſtly, yet with tenderneſſe and meekeneſſe. And the like I may ſay of thoſe endleſſe anſwers which many make, when they are demanded how counſell hath prevailed, and they rather bewray themſelves worſe and worſe, then better and better; for though it be not in our power to ſettle the ſpirit ſooner then the Lord pleaſe, yet it behoves not any diſtreſſed ſoule ſo to nouriſh themſelves in their lowring and diſtempers, as to diſmay the Miniſter; but rather by wiſe concealement or deſire of new ſatisfaction to draw his heart to pray for them more earneſtly, and waite more patiently till the ſpirit ſhall blow peace upon them.

The ſecond duty. Practiſe.

Heb.2.18.

This preparation being made, the next exhortation is, that the Miniſter of God do firſt meekly, & then wiſely, ſpeak to the heart of the afflicted. For the firſt of theſe, it is a duty much preſſed and exemplified in Scripture: I ſay a mercifull and loving heart of fellowfeeling and tenderneſſe to the heavy: For hereby the Miniſter of God conveieth the heart of the Lord Jeſus into the ſoul of the afflicted; of whom it is ſaid, He had learned compaſſion towards them by his owne ſufferings, that ſo he might pitty and ſuccour thoſe who are tempted: And ſurely wonderfull uſe there is of this grace. For alas! in theſe troubles many a poore ſoule (though not wilfull, yet) is not her owne becauſe it is overpowred with the violence, hideouſneſſe, and irkeſome of temptations without, feares and unſuſtained horrors within, ſo that for the time, it hath no power of faſtning upon counſell be it never ſo ſtrong, nay the ſtronger it is, the harder to enter. It muſt be time and ſtanching the bloud and waiting by degrees, putting in here a droppe, a line, a little and there a little into the ſoule, which muſt winne ſuch an one to ſome hope by degrees. Some texts obſerve for this. *Elihu* ſeeing *Iobs* ſtate ſore ſnarled by his prejudicate friends and by the ſelf-love of his own heart, & that it was hard to reduce all to a mediocrity, applies himſelfe in the ſpirit of ſingular modeſty and meekneſſe to be a mediator between them: Behold, ſaith he, I will not deale harſhly in miſjudging thee, but be unto thee as thine owne ſoule, this was the next way to redreſſe his ſorrowes. So *Paul* to the Galathians, when he had ſharpely reproved them, yet ſeeing many of their

Job 32.

weake

weake mindes entangled, tells them, My little children of whom I travell againe, till Jeſus Chriſt be formed in you: They had fallen into the hands of falſe teachers, who had made their ſtate more dangerous: And what doth hee? Meekely and lovingly he beſtowes the paines to travell againe of them: A woman hath enough of breeding her fruit once and bearing it once; but wee ſhould count her a very tender mother which ſhould beare the paine twice, and fellow-feele the infants ſtrivings and wraſtlings the ſecond time, rather then want her child. So *Paul* here is content to beare the paine twice of travelling for theſe Galathians, (hee meanes not a ſecond birth, but a ſecond travell to reduce them home to Chriſt from their errors) and to ſympathize them ſo far for their good, till they felt Chriſt againe revived in themſelves, after a former miſcarriage and falſe conception. Gal. 4. 19.

Simil.

So in Gal. 6. 1. The Apoſtle againe, doth require thoſe Galathians which were ſtrong, to reſtore in the ſpirit of meekeneſſe ſuch as were fallen, the word is ſet in joint: Be meeke and worke in the bone with much oile, that ſo it may returne againe into the ſocket with leſſe paine. And *Ezekiel* tells us, that this is one peculiar property of a true ſhepheard, that hee ſeeke up the loſt, and ſuffer not the bitten or broken to periſh, but carry it home upon his ſhoulder, tender it, dreſſe it, and binde it up againe. Theſe and the like places ſhew, with what ſpirit the Lord wiſhes ſuch to go to work, & even ſo be it with us in Gods fear, limpe with the halting, liſpe with the ſtuttering, ſit ſtill and be ſilent a while, till deepe affliction can ſpeake out, helpe forth the words of the diſtreſſed which ſticke in the paſſage, be tender, and pitifull, till God draw the heart by theſe cords of a man; and be as the Maſter of the cattell who taketh off the yoke and layeth meat unto them, yea as the Lord Jeſus, who would not breake the bruſed reed, nor quench the ſmoking flax, till judgement brake forth into victory. Iron and ſteele come not to an edge without much oile. Ezek. 34. 16.

Hoſea 11. 4. 13. 2.

Matth. 12.

Thirdly, apply counſell and remedies with all wiſdome and ſeaſonableneſſe, ſpeake a word in due ſeaſon. Now here the maine worke lieth. But ſome may aske and ſay, how ſhould I performe this duty? I anſwer, The variety and difference of eſtates, admit no rules in generall; onely to ſatisfie the deſirous, I will inſtance in a few kindes and ſhew what remedies moſt fitly agree with them. 3. Branch.

Obſerve wiſely and diſcerne the eſtate of the afflicted, and that will be a great helpe to tell a qualified counſellor how to judge both of the malady and medicine. For as it is in bodily diſeaſes, each one hath his ſeverall ſymptomes which are not eaſily concealed: So it is here. A wiſe man will diſcover the ſore by the behaviour of the party, both for the kinde, the meaſure, the continuance of it, and accordingly apply himſelfe. Rules for this.

Firſt then let it be one caveat, that we obſerve whether the dolor bee ſingle and ſimple, or mixt and compounded: If it be ſimple, the trouble is the leſſe: But if mixt, that is partly temporall, and that firſt and chiefe, partly ſpirituall: The way is, firſt, to ſeparate the one from the other, and not to multiply ſpirituall comforts to ſuch a one, for his diſeaſe admits none, becauſe the roote is carnall: And although it have ceaſed alſo 1. Diſcerne and ſeparate mixt ſorrow from ſingle.

2Kings

in part upon conſcience yet at the ſecond hand: Here then, labour to leſſen and diminiſh carnall and worldly griefe, if it can by any meanes be removed, as if it be a croſſe upon the name, body or ſtate, ſee if that can be effected, and then you ſhall ſee if there continue any ſorrow, if it doe not, it was meerly carnall, and no ſpirituall in it; if that cannot be removed, then labour to divert the heart from the outward to the ſpirituall; and that thus: Firſt, ſhewing that this without the other is fruitleſſe: That the ſoule may bee as miſerable without it as with it: That love or hatred ſtands not in it: That it may eaſily deceive a man about his ſorrow: That God either ſends it as a needle to draw the thred of godly ſorrow after it, by the ſtirring of the ſpirit, or elſe to leave the ſoule worſe, and that if it vaniſh as it came, it will be ſo: That the nature of it is deadly, for worldly ſorrow cauſeth death. If theſe motives ſcatter the carnall ſorrow; and the ſpirituall remaine, then it is from God: And then the counſell is, ſtrive not to remove it at firſt, but to ground it well upon the word, that it may ſeaze kindely, and ſo deale with it accordingly, as in the rules following.

2. Rule. Diſcerne diabolicall temptations from inward.

The next is, diſcerne diabolicall injections and temptations from the troubles ariſing from our ſelves. Here the counſell is, ſtrive by all means to reſolve the party that the Divell ſhall pay for his own ſin; Suggeſtions terrifying the ſpirit from Satans malice, are none of ours: Judge them by the diſproportion to the ſouls diſpoſition, their unwelcomenes, their irkeſomeneſſe, deſperateneſſe and tenaciouſneſſe. And if a poor ſoul can truly ſay, they are none of hers, although ſhe cannot be rid of the inſulting of this god of flies, yet by praier for riddance, conſtant deteſting to have fellowſhip and conſent with them, (whether thoughts againſt God, his word, the Miniſtry, Heaven, Hell, Providence, Religion or luſts and vile affections,) the Lord will weaken them, and not ſuffer thee to bee held under temptation: And to ſay truth, violent, externall cauſes laſt not long: The greateſt danger is, leſt the heart being rid of them, wax wanton and ſecure, and bee not humbled for that corruption, whence theſe have their welcome and fiery fierceneſſe.

3. Rule. Obſerve the meaſure of the trouble.

The third rule is, obſerve wiſely of what meaſure the trouble and affliction is: If it be moderate, then proceed accordingly: But if it be exceſſive, ſo that extremities may be feared, ſuccour the fainting heart with ſome hope, even at the firſt, though perhaps the condition of it may bee farre from applying a promiſe: Yet becauſe the horror or trouble may threaten deſpaire or violence: Shew ſuch a one that the Lord delights in no ſuch thing, but in mercy to the oppreſſed; and when the heart is eaſed, then returne to ſuch a method of counſell by degrees as their eſtate needeth. Neceſſity as we ſay hath no law: Much may be done to avert a preſent danger, which elſe might ſtay longer. The jaylor was to be ſtaid for feare of ſelfe-murther.

4. Rule. Whether terror come from ſin or feare of puniſhment.

Fourthly, diſcerne wiſely of terrors of conſcience, whether from ſin as ſin, or as a miſchiefe which cloggeth and loadeth the heart exceſſively. Many a wretch (and theſe dayes are full of ſuch) will roare and cry out of himſelfe, the horribleneſſe of his ſins, their returns upon him after intermiſſion, not from any true abhorring of the evill of them, but becauſe God dogs his curſed heart, (delighting in thoſe evills) with ſhrewd terrors,

terrors, which although they are two extremities, I meane great ſwinge and ſweetneſſe in ſinne, and great horrors for ſinne; yet nothing hinders why both may not be at once, and yet the mediocrity farre off. In ſuch a caſe, to beleeve ſuch a wretch for his outcries and horrors when it is manifeſt, he doth but ſeeke for hope, and ſodering, and poſſibility of pardon that hee may returne to his vomit the more boldly, were to adde oile to the flame. The marke of ſuch is this, their object is that which preſently pinches them; you ſhall heare little or no aime at Chriſt and his ſweetneſſe, for they regard it not: The counſell is, to hold them hard to the law, that their ſoules may bee under bondage of ſinne as ſinne, and not onely under preſent accuſation. If this prevaile not, they will ruſh themſelves quickly out of their horrors into prophaneneſſe more and more. And had not comfort beene well beſtowed upon ſuch as need none?

5. Rule. Conſider whether the frame of the heart under conviction, be tame or rebellious.

Fifthly, though thou perceive the ſoule to bee under bondage, yet conſider well of what frame the party is: If the heart bee rebellious and that ſinne doth wax more ſinfull by that conviction; then (though it bee a good ſigne for time to come) yet the Lord makes no haſte to comfort ſuch a one, till his rebellion bee brought downe; and then his heart will be doubly humbled both for guilt and rebellion alſo: It is meete that ſome ſhould lie and wait under their legall abaſings, becauſe elſe, commonly they returne to their old byas againe, if they come not to ſee how out of meaſure ſinfull ſinne is in her nature. I obſerve it in this age of ours, that the law troubles few, except ſome violent croſſes attend it, which argues that they will hardly hold humble when their troubles ceaſe. Be not too haſty therefore.

6. Rule. Obſerve due ſeaſon.

Sixtly, when thou ſeeſt it a ſeaſon to ſpeak a word to a poore ſoule, deferre it not: For there may be as great perill in delay, as in raſh haſte: And ſhew thy ſelfe as carefull and cordiall in preſſing of a promiſe earneſtly and effectually to a ſoule in caſe to receive it, as thou wert backward in applying it till it was ſo: A loaden ſoul is under the condition of the promiſe; and therefore to delay ſuch an one from it is to defraud it of her portion due to it, which is a worſe ſinne then raſhneſſe, even as deſpaire is worſe then preſumption. To this end, bee converſant with the promiſes, and be able to apply variety of them not knowing which may prevaile.

7. Rule. Whether under the condition or no, what lets it, or if ſo, what hinders beleeving?

If the affliction bee an holding downe of the ſoule from beleeving, when as yet it is under the condition of the promiſe; ſearch out what the ſpeciall ſtoppe of the ſoule is, and accordingly apply remedies. For inſtance, if the ſoule be toſſed too and fro between the condition and the performance, labour to ſettle the heart upon the condition firſt, proving it truly loaden, and hold it there, telling it that the Lord is willing that it hold that which it hath gotten, and then it ſhall be more eaſie to finiſh the other worke. If the glaſſe bee ſhaken who ſhall ſee his owne face rightly? So againe, if the feare be that it hath not the conditions of the Goſpel, or hath them not in ſuch a meaſure as it ought; reſolve ſuch a one that the Lord having wrought a true loading in the ſoule, will alſo worke the ſame to the ſight of eaſe by the promiſe; which promiſe as it appeares more and more reall, both in the meriter and the

2Kings

offerer; ſo it muſt needs afford more hope, more deſires, mournings and longings after it: As for the meaſure of theſe, God ſnares no poore ſoule with them: Be it never ſo feeble and bruſed, hee will not breake it. So againe, if the trouble be, that it hath long waited and is weary; that the heart is exceeding hard, corruption very ſtrong, others are got before us, we are afraid we be not elected with a hundred more, apply the remedy thereafter: And whereas the maine ſtoppe is Selfe, and aiming at our owne ends, and a dead heart to beleeve, let the counſell be thereafter: Subdue the baſe heart under meer mercy, enlarge the glory of the promiſer, above the gaine of the beleeve: Alſo bee well exerciſed in the thorow opening and urging of a promiſe on Gods part, by enlarging the length and depth, of the free, full and faithfull heart of God, infinitely above that which a ſoule can long after. But if I ſhould enter into particulars, I ſhould be endleſſe.

8. Rule. What to doe in revolts.

Eightly, if the trouble ariſe from revolts and breach of covenant after repentance, firſt, obſerve whether former experience of mercy have broken ſuch an heart or no, if not, then endeavour to breake it, and to raiſe up the ſoule from the preſent deſertion wherein it ſeemes deſtitute of that grace which formerly it enjoyed: Convince it, that the Lord hath never cut off nor caſt out any branch which was ever planted in him: Alſo that by ſuch deſertions he labours to hold the heart at a deeper bay of humility, when once it comes to outgrow the confuſion of feare and horror, which a guilty conſcience hath ſnared it withall. And laſtly, ſhew it that there is no way for her to returne to God againe by repenting, till firſt upon humiliation for her revolt, ſhee come to God in Chriſt by a promiſe, *viz.* to wit, that he bids backeſliding Idolaters, and harlots divorced, to come backe againe, and he will marry himſelfe to them, and acknowledge them for his owne.

Read for this Jer. 3.1. and Hoſea ult.

9. Rule. In deadneſſe of heart &c. Pſal.42.

If the diſtemper ariſe from the deadnes of heart, ſtrength of ſome prevailing corruption, decay of faith, ove, zeal, tendernes of heart; the party is to be encouraged by the examples of the Saints, whom the Lord hath raiſed up in the like eclipſes & wanzings of ſpirit, and that by the recovering of the ground of comfort, *viz.* the free promiſe of God, who (although his people doe withdraw from him by unbeleefe) yet doth not change as we change; but rather abides one without any ſhadow of change, and cannot deny himſelfe, though we beleeve not; but rather will revive us againe by his word, that we may live in his ſight, and goe in and out with him as in time paſt: eſpecially if wee can prove that our ebbings and decaies doe not proceed from wilfull withdrawing our ſelves.

10. Rule. Speciall feares &c.

If trouble ariſe from particular feares or ſtaggerings, which touch not a Chriſtians freehold, but onely his welfare and welbeeing, as namely from ſome ſtraits whereinto he is fallen, or temptations of Satan, which he cannot anſwer, or melancholy, or the darkeneſſe of Gods adminiſtration of his Church, ſuffering his cauſe and people to goe to the walles, and his enemies to proſper, with ſundry ſuch like, which befall a man in the courſe of Chriſtianity; the anſwer muſt lie according as the trouble lyes: As that God is not tied to one courſe with his Church in outward things, his beſt ſervants have had greateſt ſtraits: That we muſt not ſo much looke at the troubles we meetwith, as the promiſes which we have

to

to ſupport us: That the wicked have prolonged their malice and the righteous have periſhed in their innocency, and yet the whiles God hath beene moſt righteous. And ſo much for a draught of theſe inſtances, according to which, others (which are innumerable) may be conceived. And therefore to finiſh the uſe, let the Miniſter of God wiſely apply himſelfe to this worke, as knowing it to be moſt pretious, neceſſary and honourable; unto the which not onely is annexed ſpeciall encouragement here, but alſo hereafter: Here a ſavoury report, and the loines of many poore ſoules bleſſing God for us; hereafter bleſſednesſe it ſelfe and ſhining in glory, and that ſo much the more brightly, by how much we have converted many, as *Daniel* ſpeakes: And as for the difficulty of it, the Lord is able to make it ſweete and eaſie by cuſtome and experience, to ſuch as deſire to bee faithfull. And ſo much for this ſecond qualification of theſe ſervants, to wit, their milde and wiſe carriage to their Maſter in this his diſtempered condition.

Now according to my former method, I proceed from the perſons attempting, to the attempt it ſelfe. Wherein I conſidered in the ſervants a ſecret taxation of their Maſter, which I call ſo, becauſe it lyes onely couched and conveied cloſely, (as became inferiours) in the manner of utterance; for it is an expoſtulatory queſtion, intimating their diſlike of the diſtemper which he was in, and that Selfe and carnall reaſon whereby he was carried againſt the Prophet: As if they had in plaine tearmes ſaid Maſter, this thy deſcanting againſt the Prophet, by thy cavills and carnall reaſon, is not comely for a man in thy caſe: If the Prophet had ſaid ſome great thing, thou ſeemedſt forward to obey, why then doſt thou ſo cavill and contradict him in this his meſſage?

Doctrine. Selfe and carnall reaſon are juſtly reproveable.

The point is, Selfe with carnall reaſon, and ſuch like ſcurfe in rejecting the word are juſtly reprovable evills. Touching this point of carnall reaſon, I have ſaid much of it already, here I repeat nothing: If the variety of the doctrine will adde any other things worth obſervation, I will onely inſiſt thereupon, and that very ſhortly to ſhunne tediouſneſſe. Firſt, ſome proofes of Scripture, and then ſome reaſons will bee needfull to ſtrengthen the point.

Proofes. Num. 11. 22. 23.

For texts firſt, when *Moſes* objected againſt the Lords power to ſend he murmuring Iſraelites meate in abundance, ſaying, this people is ſix hundred thouſand foot men, and thou haſt ſaid, I will give them food a whole month; ſhall the flocks or the heards bee ſlaine to ſuffice them? Or ſhall all the fiſh of the ſea bee gathered together for them? What doth the Lord anſwer? Doth he put up this carnall ſpeech? No: Hee cuts him up for it: Is the arme of the Lord, ſaith he, ſhortened? Thou ſhalt ſee whether my word ſhall come to paſſe or not? Another Scripture like it, is that where the people murmured for water not at Rephidim, Exod. 17. but at Kadeſh; whereupon the Lord commanding *Moſes* to ſatisfie them by ſmiting the rocke: But they in an indignation at their baſeneſſe, outſhot them in their owne carnall reaſon, ſaying, come on ye rebells, hath God nothing to do, ſave to give you water out of the rocke? And he ſmote the rocke twice, firſt doubtingly, what came of this? The Lord was extreame angry for this carnall oppoſing the word, and cauſing theſe rebells to diſtruſt God double. Therefore (ſaith hee)

Numb. 20. 10. 11.

2 Kings

becauſe ye beleeved me not, to ſanctifie me in the eies of this congregation; therefore ſhall you not bring the children of Iſrael into the land which I have given them. Marke, here ſeemed to be a leſſer ſinne, and a greater puniſhment: For (might *Moſes* have ſaid) Are not rebells to be children? Yes, in due ſeaſon, but not then when the Lord was working a miracle among them: Therefore together with a checke hee incloſes them with thoſe rebells, both in the marke of their ſinne, calling the place Maſſa and Meriba for their cavilling with the people, as he called that of Rephidim by the like name for their murmuring againſt God: And as he told the rebells that all their carcaſſes ſhould fall in the wilderneſſe, ſo he told them that they ſhould dye there too. A ſad penalty, and reall reproofe of their carnality.

John 6.42. Another place is that of our Saviour, to thoſe Jewes who following him for the loaves, were by him perſwaded to behold himſelfe the true bread and manna and water of life: This ſeemed to their groſſe carnall ſenſe ſenſleſſe, and therefore they aske, how ſhall he give us his fleſh to eat? Our Saviour anſwers, Murmure not within your ſelves; you doe not well, you are but carnall in thus ſpeaking, for you can doe no other then as you are; till my father teach you wiſdome, it is not your reaſon can compaſſe my matters, you were as good hold your tongues as patter about them: So when *Martha*, (who yet before had ſaid that ſhee knew Iohn 11.22. 39. Chriſt could doe all things) yet ſeeing the ſtone to be rolled away, where *Lazarus* her brother was laid, cryes out, Lord by this time he ſtincketh, hee hath beene buried foure daies; but her carnality and contrariety ſo ſtancke in Chriſts noſtrills, that he is faine to checke her, even before he did the miracle; Said not I unto thee, if thou wouldeſt beleeve, thou ſhouldeſt ſee the glory of God, as if he had ſaid, why doſt thou ſo croſſe me in this my attempt? Were it not juſt to deprive thee of the miracle, Matth.14.35. ſeeing thou preferreſt thy ſenſe before my power? So *Peter*, when hee being bidden to come to Chriſt on the water, attempted to come, and by the way ſunke, (through carnall ſenſe, which told him that the waters were not things to goe upon, but the firme earth;) what ſaith our Saviour to him? Oh thou of little faith! Is it not all one for my power to ſupport thee upon the waters as upon the dry land? Why didſt thou ſtagger from my word? And many more might be heapt up to this purpoſe, all to convince, that although we might thinke it veniall for weake fleſh to cleave to her owne carnall conceits, becauſe Gods matters exceed her much; yet God having once teſtified his pleaſure by his word, lookes that fleſh lay hold upon her mouth, ſtoope to the Lord, and when it doth not, he may juſtly rebuke her. As *Sarah* for her laughing was checked, Luke 1.20. and *Zachariah* for his diſtruſt, was not onely ſo, but ſtricken dumbe for three quarters of a yeares ſpace, and all to teach them to preferre the Act.13.10. word before their owne ſenſe: So that even as *Paul* ſeeing *Elymas* to croſſe his Miniſtery, and to harden *Sergius Paulus* in his infidelity, ſets himſelfe tooth and naile againſt him, and looked ſtedfaſtly upon him, ſaying, Oh! thou full of all ſubtilty and miſchiefe, ſonne of the Divell, wilt thou not ceaſe perverting the wayes of the Lord? Even ſo, the Lord ſeeing this ſorcereſſe of carnall reaſon ſtanding at the elbow of the ſoule, to diſſwade and hold it off from beleeving, doth with indignation

cut

cut her up and ſay, Oh thou full of all venome and poyſon, dareſt thou thus pervert the truth and faithfulneſſe of the promiſe? And our Saviour did the like to *Nicodemus* caviling againſt the myſtery of Regeneration and Baptiſme, what (ſaith he) Art thou a great Doctor in Iſrael, and yet ſuch a dunce and ideot in the matters of God? What a ſhame, and (as it were) a box on the eare was this, for ſuch a Rabbi? And although he ſeemed to deale ſomewhat more fairely with *Thomas* in his refractory ſtoutneſſe of carnall reaſon, Except I ſee the print of the ſpeare in his ſides, and nailes in his hands, I will not beleeve; yet we ſhall ſee hee gave him a ſhrewd touch upon that mercifull conviction: Be faithfull (ſaith he) not incredulous: Bleſſed are they that ſee not and yet beleeve: I tell thee, It is ſmall thanke to thee to beleeve having ſeene. So much for proofes.

2 Kings

Joh. 3. 5.

Joh. 21.

Reaſons of the point are many. First this, It is the chiefe marke of all other in Gods eye, and a duty of the greateſt import, when the ſoule breaking through the miſty aire, and foggy clouds which doe beſet the cleare ſky, even as carnall reaſon overwhelmes the cleere promiſe; ſhall pierce and behold the word in her brightneſſe and true colours: Oh! how it ſpeakes to the heart of God, to be truſted upon his bare word; when the ſoule makes a tuſh of carnall objections, and ſaith, the word is againſt it: Examples we have of this alſo in Scripture: See Numb. 14. 5. where the ten ſpies bringing a verduict of ſenſe (by the terror of Anakims, and chariots of iron) to their brethren, and diſmaying their hearts from going to Canaan: Lo, thoſe two worthies *Caleb* and *Ioſhua*, cleaving to the word, made a tuſh at the other objections; If the Lord love us (ſay they) he will bring us into this land, as for theſe Giants, they ſhall be but meat for us: What are they to a word of an omnipotent God? What came of it? Surely the Lord tooke it ſo kindly, as he ſcarce knew how to expreſſe it; twice or thrice after he tells *Moſes*, *Caleb* and *Ioſhua* have honoured me before this people, and borne downe their wretched partners: Therefore of all the reſt (who ſhall leave their bones in the wilderneſſe) theſe two ſhall inherit this good land. So *David*, when all the body of the people were ſcared and ranne from the Philiſtin, onely cryed, why? Who is this uncircumciſed Philiſtin? what make yee of him? I make but a dead dog of him, a railer upon God and his hoaſt: And what came of it? God encloſed him (by his faith) into his hands, and as Heb. 11. 34. he was made ſtrong of weake, and put to flight an Army by that meanes. *Paul* alſo, Act. 27. when all were againſt him, both *Pilate*, Centurion and Souldiers, they all thought that there was no way for them but to periſh; contrary to their feares, *Paul* is confident, that not an haire of their head ſhould fall to the ground. For why? Saith he, although I ſee as much againſt it in ſhew as you doe, yet an Angel of God ſtood by me this night and told me ſo, and I beleeve God: Oh! how did the Lord honour him with the ſafety of all in the ſhip?

1. *Reaſon.*

1 Sam. 17.

Now to conclude, if the Lords heart be ſo ſet upon beleevers: How muſt he needs caſt a ſad countenance upon them that overthrow his promiſe, and will beleeve no more then they ſee? Contrary objects to thoſe which are moſt deſireable, muſt needs be moſt unwelcome? And

if

2 Kings

if the one provoke eſteeme, how can it chuſe, but the other muſt cauſe indignation?

2. *Reaſon.* Secondly, it muſt be needs a very reproveable evill which cauſeth ſuch a fulſomeneſſe and weariſomeneſſe in Gods ſtomacke: Now wee ſhall note it in the Scripture, how loathingly God ſpeakes of carnality, and a ſenſuall ſpirit in his matters. See Pſal.92. The Lord tells us, that he led the Iſraelites in the wilderneſſe as ſhepherds lead their ſheepe, and all that they might ſee his workes and know him, and truſt him the better: But (ſaith he) forty yeares long have I beene vexed with this generation; They have tempted me, proved me, and wearied me: Therefore I ſware in my wrath, they ſhould not enter into my reſt. Why? Becauſe all his miracles and deeds before their eyes, could not draw them to truſt him, but (as if heathens) they would cleave ſtill to their fleſhly reaſon. Surely he that ſweares in his wrath to deſtroy, and is vexed with people, hee doth more then reprove. This for the ſecond.

Eſay 63.

3. *Reaſon.* Thirdly, for our ſelves, how can it bee in us but a moſt damnable ſinne much more reproveable? For as it reſiſts the whole method of God through the whole world, ſo it ſinnes againſt almoſt every Chapter and line of the old and new Teſtament: For tell me, why hath God ſo furniſhed his word with ſuch ſtories of his power and greatneſſe, tranſcending our reaſon and our thoughts, as much as the heavens doe the earth, but that our ſoules might be filled with his excellency? And thinke nothing too hard for ſuch a God to doe: If he have dried up the ſea Jorden, ſtopped mouthes of Lions, raiſed up the dead, and fed ſix hundred thouſand men and women without corne or fleſh of beaſts, made water guſh twice out of a rocke, give a woman of ninety years old power to conceive, &c. doth he not deſerve to be ſet up above carnall reaſon? Doth he not deſerve at our hands more then a faint fulſome grant with *Martha*, thou canſt doe all things? Doth he not deſerve a peculiar faith for this and for that, for raiſing this dead man now at this time? For quickning this dead heart at this inſtant by this Sermon? For ſoftning this hard heart? For converting this ſoule to God? Oh! how juſtly reproveable muſt ſuch a villany needs bee! And ſurely, this let me adde, if it be ſo baſe an evill in reſpect of the diſhonour to God, muſt it needs bee ſo in reſpect of the miſchiefe which it cauſes unto our ſelves? Did ever any man hate his owne ſelfe? doth he not love and cheriſh his owne fleſh? What an unnaturall evill then is this, which chuſeth rather here with *Naaman* to periſh with the holding of a carnall will and conceit, then by denying it and claſping to the word, to be happy for ever? Sure that which is ſo derogatory to God, and ſo unnaturall to our ſelves, muſt needs deſerve ſharpe reproofe.

Eſay 55.8.

4. *Reaſon.* Fourthly, it muſt needs be a reproveable evill, which doth ſo deſperately trench upon all the Attributes of God, Power, Truth, Mercy, Juſtice, Providence and Alſufficiency: Which queſtions all, cavills againſt all, ſo that the doctrine before handled, *viz.* That carnall reaſon is a maine enemy to all the matters of revealed truths, is a full reaſon of this doctrine, that it is juſtly reproveable: Other ſinnes ſeeme to undoe the acts of God as his morall commands: But this undoes the Lord himſelfe, (in a ſort) in thoſe things wherein God is himſelfe; ſo that either God

God muſt not be God, a promiſe muſt not be a promiſe, Chriſt muſt be no Chriſt, no ſatisfaction, no redemption, or elſe carnall ſenſe muſt periſh: Both in ſtrict tearmes cannot ſtand together: God hath teſtified himſelfe in his word, admirable in this one attribute, *viz.* Providence for his Churches good in the greateſt ſtraits: Who reading the ſtrange paſſages of that one deliverance in *Eſters* time, how God concurred juſt with each circumſtance of time, of occaſion, as then to cauſe the Kings ſleepe to depart when *Mordecai* was in greateſt perill and reproach? Then when the banquet was prepared, that all other opportunities ſhould bee fore laid to oppreſſe *Haman*, and to exalt *Mordecai*? If a man would compile a ſtory according to his owne wiſh for the demonſtration of Providence, could hee frame a more punctuall one? Read *Ezra's* ſtory, *Daniels*, *Ioſephs*, doth not a naked hand of God appear in them? And yet carnall reaſon would ſay, That if there were windowes in heaven, God could not now ſave his Church, as hee hath done in their times, in *Elija's*, *Eliſha's* and others. What is this but to limit the holy one of Iſrael to our owne meaſure of working? And ſo I may ſay of all other his Attributes. Nay carnall reaſon is ſuch a deepe gulfe as is able to ſwallow downe the greateſt evidence that ever God gave to the world of himſelfe, both his Godhead and Attributes. which is the ſending of the Lord Jeſus in the fleſh into the world, to walke, live, ſuffer and dye for the ſalvation of the Elect: What can ſo ſecure the ſoule of the truth of Gods nature, perſons and realneſſe in all his promiſes as this, to cauſe the eternall God to be perſonally one with our mortall fleſh? Might not the holy Ghoſt Heb. 1.1.2. ſay, That this way of God hath greater demonſtration in it to ſtabliſh a beleeving ſoule then all that ever were beſides? And yet what uſe makes carnall reaſon hereof? Doth it not turne all to a meere ſtory without any groundworke of faith or perſwaſion? We thinke that the exhibiting of Chriſt concerned the Jewes who ſaw him, and if wee had lived with him as they, we ſhould have abhorred to diſtruſt him as they: Why? Did not God give them full aſſurance of himſelfe by his Sonne? Read Act. 17. 38. Had not they as cleere proofes out of the Prophets, that he was, and none ſave he, could bee the Meſſia? and yet their carnall reaſon did ſo abhorre him to be their Meſſia, that they hated him to the death. Juſtly then may I conclude, that this ſinne is a reproveable one. So much alſo for reaſons.

Eſters ſtory.

O

I proceed now to the Uſe: If this evill be ſo reproveable, it is pitty it ſhould want her due, and eſcape terror or reproofe: Pitty that any ſhould juſtifie the wicked againſt God! Let them therefore come in the dint of this reproofe who are groſſeſt in this kinde, Neuters and Atheiſts, who if they do not obſtinate their ſpirits to thinke of all Gods matters and the frame of Religion according to their carnall ſence, yet are as deeply careles of rejecting and bearing it down by the ſtream of the word, as *Gallio* was careleſſe of the Apoſtles and their oppoſites: How many are there who like them in *Peter*, mocke at the Scriptures, threats and terrors of it, ſaying, Where is the promiſe of his comming? Lo all things are ſtill as they were wont to be, the times, ſeaſons, affaires of men and courſe of the world; therefore wee thinke the world will endure alway: Oh ye

Vſe 1. Terror to ſundry. The firſt. Neuters, Atheiſts and Epicures and ignorant ones reproved.

2 Pet. 3.

2 Kings

ye Atheists! One yeare with God, is as a thousand, and a thousand are as one day: Do ye judge the comming of Christ by that which befalls in the space of forty or fifty yeares of one mortall life? Doe not all things decay, and cannot the Lord shake the powers of heaven, and restraine the influence of the upper bodies from the lower at his pleasure? But of this (saith *Peter*) they make themselves wilfully ignorant, that all things were made of nothing and shall returne to nothing; they perswade themselves that they ever were and so shall continue: Such a seminary there is and such a tale of scurfe here among us, even of practicke Atheists, who are led by sense as brute beasts, that me thinkes I feele my spirit sinke and faile within me, when I should scare them out of their dens: These are those prophane Swine, who although they rise not up openly to defie God and his word and threats, yet like sensuall Epicures void of all understanding, they live in a profession of infidelity, (onely differing from Pagans, in that they carry the badge of the resurrection about them for fashion sake) but else resolved to suffer no word of truth to enter into them or trouble them, and make a privy contract with Satan to hold their owne lusts, against all Preaching, what difference is there betweene thinking there is no God, and resisting him speaking in his word? Betweene open maintaining that there is no judgement, resurrection or torment for sinners, and the practice of blasphemies, swearings, breaking of Sabbaths, stealth, adultery, and all debauchednesse?

What shall I say unto you? Shall I say as that ancient Father once did to his people of Antioch, Get yee Bibles for shame, and come in (O ye uncircumcised hangbyes) to the congregation! Howster out such vermine (O ye Church officers, if ye serve for oughts) out of their kennells! But you are readier some of you rather to pursue the best of your neigbours, (take heed my words stand not upon record against you without repentance,) rather then hunt such as pester our Townes with Atheisme and Impiety! Alas! the Divell is served as well by such, as by them that have read Lectures of Atheisme heretofore! They professe a God you will say; what is that, when they are in their workes abominable, and to each good thing reprobate? They live by swinish principles and customes of darkenesse, they see all swayed by mony, favour and pollicy; they see others all for backe and belly, purse and pleasures, pompe and preferments, and therefore further they will not stir. They whom carnall reason meerly rules, are negative Atheists, because they admit of no principles which should make them other, and cause them to tremble at themselves! Oh! mourne (deare brethren) for this, that the Land swarmes with such, and pray for such as are in place, that they may reforme it, and consider with what fruit we requite God for this seventy yeares of his Gospel past, by nouzeling up among us a generation that know no more of sinne, Christ, judgement day, then the swine at the trough, but rather trample upon these pearles! Tell them of their washing, brewing, baking, startching on the Sabbath, and they answer, Alas! we are poore, and the six daies are little enough to worke in and earne meate to our bellies! we must be fed and cloathed, and more then we worke, we must looke for nothing! Others being asked about their

Tit. 2. ult.

hope

hope in death, tell us, they have had their purgatory here in want and miſery, and therefore hope they ſhall have no more hereafter! Others live by a Popiſh mixture of ſome ſhreads with their owne wiſdome, and ſuch errors of the wicked as they ſuck up every where: The iſſue of all is, they abhorre the word and thoſe that live by it, and doe wholly breath in the element of their owne carnall ſavour! Oh woefull ones! your damnation ſleepes not, and the flood of Gods wrath, the fire of vengeance ſhall ſweepe you to hell, as the waters did them who ate and dranke, married and gave in marriage, and would know nothing till they were under water! God keepe you from it: You have had your reproofe, but except God ring an alarme in your eares, you will not awake! But alas! I ſpeake to the walles, theſe Gibeonites come not within the Temple, carry them home theſe newes you that dwell by ſuch. So much for the firſt Uſe.

Matth. 24.38.

Vſe 2. Reproofe of ſundry ſorts. 1. Sort. Such as ſinne againſt ſenſible and ocular mercies, worſe then ſuch as ſinne againſt promiſes.

Secondly, is carnall ſenſe ſo reproveable? What is then an utter deſpiſing of ſenſe, and of the manifeſt waies of God, to the very eyes of men, ſo that they cannot deny the finger of God? We have many ſuch as theſe among us (beloved) ſuch as ſee the apparant hand of God upon them and among them, yea the Lord comming as it were to their doores, into their boſomes, judgements upon their bodies, children, wives, names, (even ſuch as their owne curſed mouthes have wiſhed, pox and plague, &c. and their curſed workes have procured juſtly;) and yet they are as *Pharaoh* hardened by his inchanters, even when the frogges leapt up upon his bed in his privy Chamber: what is this ſave to fight againſt heaven it ſelfe: When judgements follow not the word, men cavill and ſay, theſe Preachers cry aloud, but no thunder or lightning followes upon it: But what ſay they when the Lord plagues you, and raines ſnares and tempeſts upon you? Many of you, what diſeaſes hath the Lord caſt upon you, noyſome and ſtinking? Are ye one whit moved by it? You uſe to anſwer (as the ſorcerers did) all ſorts are troubled with one diſeaſe or other; all ſorts have ſome poore, in reproach, &c. But you know that yours are ſent upon you for your debauched courſes? Doe you ſee God againſt you? Had not *Thomas* beene groſſely reproveable, if when Chriſt thruſt his hands into his ſides to feele the print of his nailes, he had beene unfaithfull? But theſe mens eyes goe out with beholding the Sunne ſhine in their faces!

Note well all theſe following Inſtances.

How many are there of you here, who have cavilled at God, that hee puts no difference betweene bad and good in point of bleſſings; and lo, God hath ſerved your turne, brought you out of debt, ſet you up, and planted you well, ſo that you take roote and grow upward: Is not here ocular and ſenſible mercy? I demand now of ſuch, are you any better? Doe you ſee God in this? I denounce before the Lord unto you this day, that the mercies you have wiſhed and doe enjoy, ſhall bee the heavieſt corraſives to you that ever befell, and ſhall ſting you as fire! Why? Becauſe thoſe covenants and vowes which you made are all broken and forfeit, when yet God hath fully done his part! Had it not beene better that he had kept you hungry and beggerly ſtill?

2. Sort.

Others of you, what mones and chatterings have you made (like Cranes, as *Hezechia* did) upon your ſicke beds unto God? Oh! ſhould the

3. Sort.

2Kings

the Lord take us away in our prime of youth, our beſt yeares, ere wee have ſpent any time in the land of the living, to prepare our ſelves to meete him! The Lord hath heard you, (or elſe earneſt praier for you I am ſure of it) and hath brought ye from the brinke of the grave, and ſet you upon your feet again: What is come of it? Are you any more penitent then you were? Doth the preſence of God awe you? Doe you walke ſoftly in your houſe (as he ſaid) as having ſcaped a ſcouring, and felt Gods fingers? Have not your recoveries made you more fledge and ſawcy with God, ſo that now yee fare as if the winde were turned, and you had the Lord at a vantage? I denounce here unto you, that moſt of you are waxen groſſe, fat, laden with fatneſſe, you have deſpiſed the God of ſalvation: And inſtead of *Hezechias* words, The living, the living ſhall praiſe thee, you may ſay, the living are worſe and ſtinke worſe above ground, then if they had beene rotting in their graves: So that by experience we are now growne to truſt no ſicke mens promiſes whatſoever they bee! Oh you wofull people! Doe you thus requite the Lord? Alas! I foreſee you are ripe for the harveſt, and groane for the ſickle to reape you downe indeed at laſt without any remedy! And although ſome of you make a ſhift to hold out, yet your damnation ſleeps not, it ſhall come like a whirlewinde, when you cry peace moſt, then ſhall it come ſwiftly! Oh be reproved!

Deut. 32.13. Eſay 38.

1 Theſ.5.2.

4. Sort.

And leſt I ſhould touch upon outward bleſſings and deliverances only, let mee adde ſomewhat of Gods word and his patience towards others of us: How have ſome of you here preſent complained of your ſillineſſe to conceive the things of God, the hardneſſe of your hearts to melt at the word? How have you beene vile in your ſelves for your ignorance and unbeleefe? How have you wondred at the gifts of others? Oh! if I might obtaine mercy of God, to pray as ſuch, to remember, to conferre as they, how ſhould I uſe it? The Lord hath heard ſome of you, granted you light and diſcerning, melted your hearts, enlarged your affections, ripened your gifts; and hath any ſweet fruit proceeded from hence? Could ye alſo truſt him for the creating of the grace of faith in you, and for converting your natures? have you not given him over in that worke, for the granting whereof he was ſealed, I meane the ſeeking of the meat that periſheth not? No: But hee hath beene content with common gifts and ſo reſted? You have therefore ſhewed you ſelves falſe in covenant, and given over the Lord in the plaine chaſe, when you might have felt and groped the Lord in his manifeſt providence.

Joh.6.27.

Act.14.

6. Sort.

Others, how hath God lengthened out their daies beyond expectation? When as they never looked to have harrowed that which they had ſowne, not ſo much as to ſee one of their children brought up: How hath God given them a reſtitution from paines and infirmities, and made their latter daies (which they never thought to ſee) farre better then the former; ſo that they have lived to ſee more of Gods truth both in word and works, then ever they imagined. But what, hath this long ſuffering of God led them to repentance? Hath not their clay laid in the warme ſunne, hardened the more? Is their any power in their ſoules to breake off their old luſts, and to returne to God ſincerely? No ſurely, but having

Rom.2.3.

ving the better end of the ſtaffe, they have prolonged life, to encreaſe wrath, and to treaſure up vengeance. Nay (to ſpeake a word to the better ſort) how many of us in our deepe heavineſſe of ſpirit under the burthen of conſcience, when no counſell could worke upon us, have even given ſentence on our ſelves, that there is no hope; how have wee counted our lives ſcarce worth a ſtraw under our feete? Yet hath the Lord blowne over our fears, made a calme, ſwallowed up death into victory? Nay, ſome of us in our deepeſt ſickneſſes of body, (when ſinne and Satan are moſt buſie) have we not found God neerer to us, then in our beſt health? Hath he not anſwered us as *Hanna* in our long praiers? Hath he not enlarged the promiſe unto us by the ſeale of his Spirit, making (as I may ſay) the light of the Moone, as the light of the Sunne, and the light of the Sunne ſeven times greater then ever, in comfort and holy confidence above all feares? How hath this wrought with us? Hath it knit us in ſo firm a covenant with God as never to be broken off? Hath it cauſed us to walke here below as ſhadowes, and to deſpiſe all the earth in compariſon of our hopes? I doubt not but ſome doe, and ſhall finde the fruit of it at death.

2 Kings 7. Sort. Jerem. 2.

But oh! that ſuch faire wether ſhould doe harme, and be an occaſion to make us wax wanton, earthly, and thinke grace to be pind to our ſleeves, how reproveable is it? Good brethren, looke to your ſelves: If carnall reaſon bee ſo baſe, what is it to blindfold our eies againſt ocular mercies? Oh! ſuch favours as ſome of us have met with, ſhould make us cry out, I have found, I have found! God hath not dealt with others as with me! Therefore whether it be my lot to be in ſtraits, or whatſoever temptations, I muſt endure, yet I will call to minde the old mercies of the Lord and be comforted; yea I will gladly be under infirmity, that the ſtrength of God may be perfected in me; and though he kill me, yet I will truſt in him through mercy! Oh that this fruit might appeare! Who would have thought that when *Hezechias* requeſt was granted, to wit, the going backe of the Sunne tenne degrees for the aſſuring of his recovery, that his recovery ſhould have beene ſo ſtained with apoſtacy? But alas! God hath made our fears and griefes goe back as many for us, and yet we have revolted, not as he did once, but made a falling ſickneſſe of our courſe!

2 Cor. 12. 9.

To conclude the Uſe: In the Sacraments and Seales of Gods Covenant, how hath Chriſt come (as it were) in his likeneſſe unto us, and by outward ſignes ſpoken to all our ſenſes, yea thruſt our hands into his very ſides, that if it be not himſelfe, let us diſtruſt him ſtill; ſee, feele, ſmell, handle, taſte, eate my fleſh, drinke my bloud: a fancy hath no ſubſtance; lo here is ſubſtance: What fruit hath it had? Brethren, I ſhall ſpeake a fearfull ſpeech, I am reſolved that the carnall reaſon of moſt men is enlarged, rather then diminiſhed by the Sacraments: And the judgement of moſt is become greater by them, then if they had never had any! Alas they cry not out as aſhamed and convinced ones, My Lord and my God! *Thomas* himſelfe ſhall riſe up againſt ſuch! So much for this Uſe alſo.

8. Sort.

Thirdly, let this be a caveat to Gods owne people, to teach them to beware of this evill (except they will have the Lord reprove them to their

Vſe 3. Admonition.

2Kings

their faces) *viz.* That they will beleeve God no further then they see him, when they heare the promises urged upon all broken and mourning soules; what say they? Yea you say well, if wee could feele it thus!

Instances. 1. Putters off the promise to be reproved.

First, I say this may bee a pranke of an hollow heart, and then it is horrible: As we see in those Jewes, who were alway pressing upon Christ for a signe: Tell us if thou be the Christ? And why? Not as meaning to beleeve, (for so he tells them. I have told you oft by preaching and miracles, yet you beleeve not;) but as a cloake of your prophaneneſſe, *viz.* That they could not so cleerly behold him as they desired. But put case it be otherwise with us, and that thou meaneſt simply: What then? Is thy speech to be commended? No, in no case: For why? Dost thou not go by the worlds rule, it seems not to be so, I cannot thinke it; Is this enough to bury the truth of a word of the eternall God under? Doe not still speake evill of the way of salvation, because God makes it not so rationall as thou wouldeſt, and will not sell thee heaven for thy praiers and devotions? He askes no more then his word beleeved, will give thee power to performe, if thou reject it not by distruſt.

2. Instan. Administrations of God must not be quarrelled.

Another Instance is this: Beloved, so long as Gods government in the Church, or upon our selves pleases us, while hee dandles us in his lap, holds off enemies, enlarges our abilities, keepes under our corruptions, tries us by no great temptations, annoints our paths for us, and gives us better gifts, fruit of our labours and outward blessings, then we expected: Oh how we can cleave to him! This drawes water out of a marble stone! But let our sunne enter never so little into an eclipse, or if God remove our strong holds from us, leave us to enemies, seem to smile upon them, side with them, suffer them to enjoy whatsoever their heart could wish, in having their wills on us: But to frown upon us not onely while we sinne, but when we repent, and to disregard us even in our most frequent & importunate praiers: Do we then perſist in our uprightnes? Dowe then (as *Micah* saith) beleeve that still Gods word is as good as ever it was, to such as walke uprightly? When neither Moon nor Sun appears for many dayes, do we abhor to suffer darkeneſſe to poſſeſſe us within, because there is such a darkeneſſe without? Can we fall to *Pauls* remedy, Act.27.20. I beleeve God? No, no, wee cavill and say, If the Lord be with us, how are all these evills upon us? Why I beseech you? Although hee hath promised to all beleeving soules to shew them light in darkeneſſe, and after to turne their darkeneſſe into light, yet did hee ever promise us to keepe this darkeneſſe quite from us? Had Christs love so appeared, if he had come and kept *Lazarus* from dying, as it did by raising him up when hee was dead and beganne to stinke? Bring me forth one word sounding that way that God would alway ke epe one even tenor of outward peace and prosperity over his Church, and then tell him hee is not as good as his word.

Pſal. 80.4. Job 1. Mica 2.7.

Act.27.20. Judg.6. Mica 7.9.10.

But this is a Religion better fitting Papists (who know not what faith is) then such as we! Oh be warned! This carnality of ours sits neere Gods heart, loades him as the cart with sheaves is loaden: Doe not give

give God over thus: ſay there will be light for the righteous, it is ſown for them, though not come up, yet God is good to Iſrael, to the upright in heart: The eternall ſtrength of God is a braſen pillar, which the ſoul may ſwing all her ſtrength upon in the greateſt ſtraits, & (although heaven and earth goe together) ſuch ſhall have peace, peace, that is ſure peace, as *Eſay* ſpeaks: and as for carnall reaſon, ſhe ſhall ſee it too, but ſhe ſhall not eat thereof, it is a dainty onely ſerving for waiters and beleevers: It is faith which muſt doe the worke of workes, keepe fire from conſuming the buſh, or burning the three children: It is faith which muſt doe all theſe feats, Heb. 11. 35. 36. 37. Carnall reaſon never wrought one miracle, but it hath marred many. Faith and the power of God hath kept a venice glaſſe from being broken againſt the wall, when it was caſt with violence: But carnall reaſon breakes all it throwes.

Pſal. 73. 1.

Eſay 26. 2. 3. 2 King. 7. 3.

Therefore to conclude, take heed of her, and learne admonition to lot upon the word of truth, for thy ſelfe, for the Church, in the promiſe of God, in the providence and alſufficiency of God: If he ſatisfie not thy deſires, know it is not becauſe he is weaker, or falſer, or leſſe pitifull then he was, but he hath other ends then thou ſeeſt, hee aimes at purging out thy canker of Selfe, and perhaps hath more univerſall ends for the manifeſting of his vengeance upon a Nation not worthy to be beloved, & deſerving a decree to come forth: This is no ſeaſon for carnall ſenſe to lowre, but for faith to fall to worke, if not to ſave others, yet to ſave each one himſelfe, and lay in (as *Ioſia* did) for himſelfe, that he may have his life for a prey, and he may not ſee the evills which ſhall come upon others. And ſo alſo to lay in pledges of hope for poſterity, that when Gods winter is come downe, and his people ſcoured, and his old braſſe and candleſticks melted, he will make better veſſels of our poſterities, even zealous ones, and prepared for every good worke.

Jer. 45. 2 Kings 22. 20.

And againe, a third Inſtance may be this: The outward difficulty of the times is great, the Lord having marveilouſly plagued our ſpirituall ſurfeting upon his bread of life, not onely with a famine of it, but even with cleanneſſe of teeth. This hath beene a ſore yeare for the poore, and pinched the rich! What doe you poore ones now? (For the rich may ſcape better:) Do ye fall to fears that you ſhall be ſtarven? Or your do ye ſolace your ſelves, that ſtill the word abides for a ſtay unto hearts in theſe hard times? Tell me truly? Doth leſſe meat ſerve you becauſe you truſt God? Doth faith and a cheerfull heart make a little goe a great way? Or doe ye runne to the curſed phraſe, If windowes were in heaven it could not be holpen: Truly I hope ſome of ye ſpeake the truth, when you ſay, Gods word (for man is not fed with bread only) doth ſuſtaine you! It is a ſigne that fleſh and ſenſe doe not altogether beare rule! I am glad it is no worſe; goe on and proſper, and as the Lord hath hitherto holpen you, ſo that the ſcarſity of other theviſh ſavage poore hath not oppreſſed you, ſo hee ſhall ſtill finde mercy in mens hearts and purſes to relieve and helpe you through this famine while plenty come; onely learne by this experience to build your altar with *Samuel*, and ſay, Hitherto the Lord hath holpen us, and ſo hee will: he hath not kept us from a Beare and a Lion, that a Giant, a Dog

3. Inſtance.

1 Sam. 7. 12.

2Kings

Habac.3.

Conclusion of the Use.

Simil.

Psal.73.

1 Pet.1.20.

Vse 4.

should destroy us. Say thus, The Lord hath not yet put us so sharply upon the pikes of famine, as that we should eate our owne children, or mice, dogs, cars and rats, as in former ages of Popery they have done in this Kingdome: Therefore I will trust him still, and although there shall be no Calfe left in the stall, nor Bullocke in the flocke yet the Lord shall be my salvation. I will not (as poore as I am) say, as a Carle lately did, of great wealth, I shall dye a beggar: Neither will fall to pillaging and breaking open granaries to serve my turne, nor rise up against the rich, as lately some did in some parts of this Country, and were justly executed.

Lastly, in generall, be we armed by this doctrine and admonition, against the common sway of the age to beleeve as we see: They say of the dampe in Colepits, that if it come, it will cause the candle to burne blue, and thereby the workemen haste them to the mouth of the pit presently, least they be choaked. This world is the Colepit, this dampe is the carnall Religion of it, the candle burning blue, is the infection of mens understandings and wills: when therefore we see this infection to have tainted most mens hearts, and the power of goodnesse decaying; then let us be warned, looke to our lives, ere we be choked with the error of the wicked, and let us runne to the pits mouth, and desire to bee haled up to the open aire; let us goe to the Word and Testimony, and as *David* did, ere he was quite stifled, let us goe into the Sanctuary, and lay this carnall religion in the ballances of it, and we shall find it too light, and such as is reprobate silver, for both weight and substance, and then we shall cling to a more sure word of the Prophets and Apostles shining in a darke place, which doing, we shall doe well, and so not bee reproved or rejected. So much for this third.

Fourthly, let this be Information to all who would shunne this bitter reproofe of God; to bee well advised how they enter upon Religion, with a sound judgement about the nature thereof. Marke and learne this, as all common thinges (for the most part) goe by sense and rationall grounds: So Gods matters goe by contraries. Logicke and Philosophy reach not, comprehend not Gods mysteries. Religion is not against sense or reason, (for then why should *Paul*, 1 Cor.15. urge the Atheist by similitudes of naturall things, to grant spirituall, convincing him of the resurrection by naturall experience of the corne rotting ere it live? And so by others:) But its above it, and therefore resists it; rules of art and reason faile here: Reason saith, of nothing comes nothing: God saith I create the fruit of the lips, peace, even of nothing: Yea of nothing comes every good thing. He that denies himselfe and is nothing, shall be my Disciple. Other vertues goe by addition: Gods by subtraction. God counts the things that are not, as if they were. The principles of Divinity are not as sense is. The Lord Jesus himselfe truly eternall, yet truly mortall. God cannot dye, and yet they killed the Lord of life. Christ a very man, and no person, but a nature. By death to conquer death is a senslesse thing in reason. Flesh consumed to dust, yet shall bee made againe the selfe same body. Reason attempts great things by great instruments. The Lord uses the poorest and silliest. Reason would say, the richest make most rich: Religion tells us,

As

As poor, and yet making many rich. As having nothing yet poſſeſſing all things. That a poore company of fiſhermen ſhould conquer the world, which *Alexanders* army could not. That Babes ſhould underſtand myſteries which wiſe men cannot. That the King of all the world ſhould ride upon an Aſſe, &c. How abſurd are theſe notions? But to be principled in theſe ſenſleſſe truths, irrationall principles, what a wonderfull advantage is it to a poore ſoule in her firſt entrance upon Religion? How will it prepare the heart to beare downe reaſon and fleſh? To thinke the better of truth by how much it croſſes reaſon moſt? To beare troubles and croſſes meekely, becauſe by how much leſſe they promiſe any happineſſe, by ſo much the rather they performe it? So much for this uſe of Inſtruction.

Vſe 5. Conſolation. Cloſe cleavers to Gods promiſe, are in a bleſſed ſtate.

Laſtly, let this point bee uſe of comfort to all Gods people, who cleave to the word, or elſe ſoone recover their ſliding foote from this common error: For if carnall reaſon be ſo reproveable, then is living by faith commendable. The Lord ſhall one day cauſe thy light to breake forth poore ſoule who in all the forenamed reſpects, lookeſt more to *Paul* then the Pilot, to the word, then the world and her Religion. Thou liveſt here as a diſpiſed creature, as one of Gods fooles thruſt up into a corner, as a candleſticke throwne up and downe the houſe, who wert wont to hold out the candle to the houſe of God: Be of good cheere, if thou be content to be as God will have thee, and to teach thine owne ſoule in ſtead of teaching others, if thou be one who wilt thruſt thine eyes blindefold into Gods boſome, and ſee no further then he hath light for thee; take courage to thy ſelfe, one day it ſhall be better, and the Lord ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſſe as noon day. He ſhall take thee from among the crokt pots, and reſtore thy doves ſilver wings as bright as before: waite the whiles, & be doing the thing which is good. When the Lord ſhall come in flaming fire againſt all that have ſet up their creſt againſt him, and bee a ſwift witneſſe againſt them, then ſhall he refine his *Levy* with this fire of triall, and by this day (or night rather) of tentation, which he hath ſpread over the face of the earth, if thou hold the word of his patience, he ſhall bring thee forth of the Colepit. And then ſhall hee be admired by them and in them that beleeve, becauſe (abandoning themſelves) the word was received by them in that day! I ſay, caſt not away thy confidence, it hath great recompence of reward. But what ſhould I need to comfort thee, who carrieſt the matter of comfort within thee? So much for this uſe alſo, and for the whole doctrine be ſpoken; as alſo of the firſt thing which ariſes out of the attempt it ſelfe of theſe ſervants, &c.

Mica 6 9. Pſal. 37.

Mal. 3. 3, 4. Reve. 3. 14. 2 Theſ. 1. Heb. 10. 37.

THE THIRTEENTH LECTVRE

Still continued upon this thirteenth VERSE.

VERSE XIII.

And his ſervants came neere, and ſaid unto him, Father, if the Prophet had bid thee doe ſome great thing, wouldeſt thou not have done it? How much more then, when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh and be clean?

VERSE 14. *So he went downe, &c.*

2 Kings

Have in the laſt Exerciſe (Beloved) as you may remember, finiſht the attempt of the ſervants; being the ſecond generall of the Verſe. Now we proceed in order to the third: *viz.* The arguments which they uſe to perſwade their Maſter to obey the meſſage: I told you there were foure of them: I come to the firſt, & that is of greateſt weight, let us note it wel. And that is, that this obeying and waſhing, was an eaſie taske. The words give it cleerly, for thus they argue, If it had been a difficult thing which the Prophet had enjoyned thee, thou wouldeſt have done it, and wilt thou not doe this which is ſo eaſie? So that now this firſt motive, they oppoſe to the chiefe ſtop and let in their Maſters thoughts, *viz.* That it was a troubleſome and unlikely way to ſucceed: They tell him no, it was a very eaſie one, and likely to ſucceed: For the other reaſons I will open them as I come to them.

The third generall, viz. The arguments. The firſt whereof, is the eaſe of obeying.

First, let us faſten upon this: And for the Text you ſee it manifeſt, the ſervants urge their Maſter with the priviledge which God by the Prophet hath beſtowed upon him: God (ſay they) of meere mercy hath ſent for thee by his Prophet, of his owne accord offered thee a cure, upon condition of waſhing: By this meanes it comes to paſſe that what-

whatſoever it be to other lepers, whom God hath not vouchſafed this honour (to whom it is no eaſie worke) yet to thee it is: Looke not thou at the difficulty of the cure in it ſelfe, or to others, looke thou at the priviledge which God conferres upon thee above others, and to be ſure by vertue thereof, thy cure is eaſie. Now if it be ſo, ſtand not queſtioning any longer why ſuch and ſuch lepers come ſhort of cure, leave that to God; (mercy onely can give a reaſon of that) but conſider that, to thee, *Naaman* in perſon, this grace is offered, to waſh and be cleane: Take the offer as it lyes to thee thus under Gods call, and to thee it muſt needs be as eaſie as it ſeems. Now if it be ſo, make it not worſe then God hath made it: That which God hath made eaſie, make not thou difficult: But waſh and be cleane.

The point then is this, Obeying of the charge of God. To beleeve and be ſaved, is an eaſie taske. But here quickly you will object, how is this Doctrine raiſed? Did *Naamans* ſervants, or *Naaman* himſelfe, underſtand each other, or conceive the charge and promiſe, to reach at any thing ſave a meere bodily cure?

Queſt. What is that to the beleeving of a promiſe? The eaſe of the one, proves not the other eaſie.

Anſw. I anſwer as before, I grant your objection to be true, in reſpect of themſelves conſidered apart: but now I conſider them both in and under the aſſiſtance of that grace, which intended *Naamans* converſion in all the paſſages concurring thereto: So that as the affronts and humblings which *Naaman* had, were ordered by the Lord for a ſpirituall humbling & ſelfedeniall, ſo the advice of the ſervants is guided by God to a ſpirituall iſſue, although perhaps neither of them ſaw it for the preſent till afterward. Who can ſay, that the words of that poore blinde man, Joh. 9. 10. in the defence and honour of Chriſt, were (to his own feeling) any other, then meere thankefulneſſe and naturall affection to Chriſt for his benefit of ſight received? For as yet he had no faith; and yet it is queſtionleſſe, that on Chriſts behalfe, they were ſecret ſeeds of that eſteeme of Chriſt, and breakings off from the hopes of things below, which afterward brake out more cleerly, (when Chriſt met him) into actuall beleeving. So much for that. The barre being removed, we come to the point.

Doctrine. The obedience to the command of faith is eaſie. Here (becauſe this point will bane all hypocrites who runne apace to this baite, as pleaſing to the palate) let me put in a word or two to ſtoppe their haſty proceedings. I meane not that every drunkard, or wretched adulterer, (who come ſteaming forth of the ſtewes, or from their Alebench) or any other ſuch, ſhall finde it (in the caſe they are) an eaſie worke to beleeve: No, bee it knowne unto them, that its ſimply a thing impoſſible for them, as ſuch, to attaine it. It is as eaſie (ſaith our Saviour) for a Camel to goe through the eie of a needle, as for a rich man (whoſe confidence is in his riches) to enter into heaven: I ſhall at large give them their anſwer in due time; onely this I prefix to the point, to beat off any from ſuch a vaine confidence. The Text harpes upon another ſtring, to wit, one who (by peculiar providence) was made capable of this priviledge, and to him and all ſuch as are under the aſſiſting grace of God its eaſie.

Obedience to the command of faith is eaſie.

Explication. Matth. 19. 23.

The

2 Kings

J h.5.

The phraſes which the holy Ghoſt uſeth in this kind to evince it; as it was otherwiſe with *Naaman* here, then with ſuch diſeaſed lazers, as lay at the poole at Bethesday, who came to the poole, but yet they muſt attend the moving of the waters firſt, by the Angel, elſe not: But *Naaman* had a call by the Prophet to come downe, and then an abſolute promiſe, that upon his meere waſhing (without any other condition) hee ſhould be forthwith clenſed: So I ſay, the gift was free, and without any more adoe, conferred upon his obeying. So here, thoſe whom the promiſe concernes, have no more to doe but ſimply to beleeve, and to them its eaſie: I ſay not now, how every ſuch one doth finde it, but how the Lord offers it, and how it might be, if he did not lay not offences in his owne way, if hee make it difficult and put in more conditions then the Lord puts in, (who ſaith ſimply to a loaden ſoule, Come, I will eaſe thee) the fault is his owne. Marke the phraſes of Scripture. The gift of God is eternall life. Whats eaſier and freer then gift? As many as received him, hee gave them the gift to be called the Sonnes of God? What is eaſier then receiving this gift? Lord thou haſt done all our workes in us (ſaith *Eſay*) what is more eaſie then to have a mans worke done for him? Heaven is called an inheritance. What is more eaſie then for a child to bee made his fathers heire, and to poſſeſſe all his lands? It is the holy Ghoſts phraſe, that we are married to Chriſt? What is more eaſie then for a poor deſolate wench which hath nothing to take too, to conſent to be the wife of a Prince, or ſome great man, eſpecially if he be a ſutor to her, and will have no deniall in any caſe? So what is eaſier then to paſſe away without any exact payment of a mans debt by the neere account of his creditor, who imputes it as paid, and imputes it not as due, although it be unpaid? Take a free man of Londons ſon and heire, what is an eaſier thing then for him then to be borne free of the City? It coſts him nothing, it is a priviledge caſt upon him. As *Paul* told *Lyſias*, he was a Citizen of Rome, and when he replied, it coſt him a great fine: *Paul* told him, but I am ſo borne, it coſt me nothing. I will not any longer dwell upon bare illuſtrations: I know that every word I ſpeake, makes you ſtand upon thornes till you ſee the bounds of the point: Therefore firſt I will reaſon it, mixing here and there proofes of Scripture, then apply it with ſuch caution and encouragement (if God pleaſe) as ſhall both ſholl out the dogs, and welcome the children whoſe bread it is.

Rom. 6 ult. John 1.12.

Eſay 26. Epheſ. 1.20. Hoſea 2.12.

Pſal.32.1.

Act.25.

Reaſons.
1. In reſpect of the difficult way of the Law.

The reaſons may bee taken from ſundry kinds of eaſe. Firſt, from that reſpective eaſe which ſtands in relation: And for that I ſay, that there is great difference between the difficult way of the Law, and the ſweet way of the Goſpel. The Law preſcribed a tedious, yea an impoſſible way to heaven, Doe this and live, requiring ſo exact, pure and ſtrict a way, as exceeded the capacity and ability of our fallen nature to attaine: Now the Lord in the Goſpel propounds another way, moſt eaſie and comprehenſive, and that in and by another, ſaying, Beleeve and live. He changes the rigor and burdenſomeneſſe of doing, into the eaſe of beleeving, which tranſlates the guilt and curſe of the ſoule upon another, tranſlates the ſervice of obedience upon another, drawes power and ability to endeavour after obeying from another, who alſo

alſo covers and conceales the defects thereof, and accepts ſuch endeavours as proceed from a nature in great part unſanctified, as if they came from an intire and perfect principle. As imputation of a righteouſneſſe, is a farre eaſier thing then an infuſed and inherent righteouſneſſe dwelling within us: So the way of the Goſpel, is farre more eaſie then the way of the Law: See Rom. 8.3. For what the Law could not doe through the weakeneſſe of fleſh, God ſupplied. How? By ſending his Sonne both to condemne ſinne in the fleſh, and in the ſame fleſh to fulfill all righteouſneſſe: Why? That the righteouſneſſe of the Law, might be fulfilled in us. In whom? Even in weake ones who had no ſtrength, by a farre eaſier way then the Law impoſed. See alſo Rom. 10.6.7. The Law ſaith, he that doth the commandements, ſhall live in them: But the righteouſneſſe of faith, ſaith another thing: What is that? Beleeve and live: Say not, who ſhall aſcend to heaven? Or who ſhall deſcend into the deepe? For Chriſt hath both deſcended of his own accord to ſatisfie and aſcended thither in triumph: And this word is offered unto thee, is neere thee, is in thy mouth and thy heart to do it: & the doing it, is only the beleeving it: If thou confeſſe with thy mouth, and beleeve in thy heart this ſweet eaſie way of God, thou ſhalt be ſaved. So much for the firſt Reaſon.

2. *Reaſon.* In reſpect of a further thing which the Lord aimes at. 2 King. 3.

Secondly, this appeares in another reſpect alſo. The Lord aimes at a further thing then the obedience of beleeving: He aimes alſo at this, the reducing of our decaied and corrupt frame of nature, to his owne image in light and holineſſe. Now as he who aimes at a maine ſcope in a thing, thinkes it a light thing to compaſſe the meanes tending thereto: So it is here, take an Inſtance: *Iehoram* and two other Kings, combined to deſtroy *Moab*, in their journey they were like to periſh for lacke of water: They conſult with *Eliſha*: He (at laſt) tells them, This is a light thing with the Lord to give you water, and ſave your lives, for he intends a further bleſſing, to deliver *Moab* into your hands. It was not light to worke ſuch a miracle, but in reſpect of a further aime, it was but light: So to beleeve is not eaſie in reſpect of it ſelfe, ſo much as in reſpect of a further excellency, to reſtore us to that perfect image of God which once made us happy; it is light with the Lord to take of our guilt, to remove our curſe, and that barre which ſtood in our way by *Adams* fall, to keepe us from ever comming to God againe, in his pureneſſe and holineſſe of nature. This may be a ſecond reaſon.

3. *Reaſon.*

Thirdly, let us come from reſpective eaſe, to reall eaſe: And here we ſhall alſo finde, that in two reſpects, The obedience of faith is eaſie. Firſt, in reſpect of the preparation leading to it. Secondly, of the effectuall working of the gift of obeying the Goſpel. For the former, wee ſhall diſcover it in theſe two things: Firſt, in reſpect of the price: Secondly, of the manner of diſpenſation. Touching the former of theſe, the price was eaſie: Marke my meaning: I ſay not, that it was an eaſie price in it ſelfe conſidered: Although if ſome idle brains might be beleeved, the price ſhould not be great; for they ſay, that Chriſt was ſuch a perſon as to whom ſin could not be ſo imputed, as to take hold of him by the curſe; but God imputed this eaſe to the excellency of the perſon of his Son (being God) that inſtead of ſuffering the wrath of Gods juſtice

Note this againſt Sectaries.

2Kings

ſtice in his ſoule and body; he ſhould onely ſuffer ſo much penalty as that traitor *Iudas*, and thoſe enemies of his, *Pilate*, the Elders and ſouldiers inflicted; and this ſuffering, although in it ſelfe not equall to juſtice, yet God the Father imputed it as an equall ſatisfaction: A moſt horrible fancy! we renounce it; and affirme, that the eaſe of the price ſtands not in him that paid it, for ſo it is the moſt full, deare and coſtly purchaſe, that ever was paid ſince the beginning, yea greater then the damned in hell pay, who by all their paying ſatisfie not: But its eaſie to us, it comes to our hands ready wrought and finiſhed, and coſts us nothing at all, the Lord doth not require of us ſo much as the wetting of one finger, or ſtirring of one joint towards a price (for it were bootleſſe) ſo we can but accept it, and apply it to our ſelves. Chriſt paid a moſt full price, to the coſt both of bearing his Fathers wrath, and deſertion for a time (although with moderation of extremities and diſguiſements) in his ſoule, and the effuſion of the laſt drop of his heart and lite bloud in his body; and leſſe then this would not, nor could not ſatisfie juſtice, for if it would it ſhould; and the Lord offered his Son wrong, if he might have taken leſſe, & yet would urge more. I ſay this being conſidered that he choſe this in his wiſdome as the beſt;) and for my part, I ſee it not to be any trenching upon the omnipotency of God, or any other ends of God whatſoever, to urge this for the ſafeguard of his juſtice; for without the integrity thereof he is not God: If he would have his Son loſe his glory that he might ſatisfie juſtice, and then would content himſelfe with a pageant of ſatisfaction by imputing; why might not Chriſt wholly have beene ſpared as well? But this by the way: becauſe I ſee many incline to thinke God might (if he had would) ſatisfied himſelf in the pardoning of ſinne without ſatisfaction made; which Divinity paſſes my skill, and I thinke ſavours more of Socinianiſme and Humanity, then Divinity. I returne: In reſpect either of the Fathers cutting off his plea, and finding out a mercy in the bottome of his breſt exceeding juſtice and revenge; or the conſent of the Sonne to admit of thoſe conditions of obeying and ſuffering, for the purchaſe of peace, and aboliſhing enmity, Col.1. it is moſt ſtrange, unlikely and difficult: But conſidering that he to whom all things are eaſie, would apply and bend himſelfe with all his power, wiſdome and truth, to bring his good pleaſure of free ſaving to paſſe, and would devoure all difficulties; therefore nothing could be hard, but all eaſie to ſuch love ſo armed and attended: God ſo loved the world (ſaith Saint Joh.3.12.) that he gave his onely Sonne: But otherwiſe in it ſelfe it was a great thing. *Iacobs* toile in heat and froſt was great, (though love made it ſweet.) And ſo to end, though it coſt Chriſt an infinite price, yet being freely offered to us, it coſt us nothing, its eaſie.

4. *Reaſon.* In reſpect of the diſpenſation of it.

Fourthly, the diſpenſation is eaſie. In reſpect whereof, the Lord doth not reſtraine nor limit his grace, and the efficacy of this price, (I ſpeake now of his revealed will, not ſecret) but offers it by the Miniſtry of the Goſpel to all ſorts, without let or barre: That whoſoever will ſubmit himſelfe to his way and diſpenſation with humbleneſſe, the Lord will be found (ordinarily) by ſuch, without putting difference: He doth not ſh oll out or diſcourage any, as if hee did not intend it to them,

them, he doth not reject any who reject nor him, nor forſake any (conceive me rightly) who forſake not him: And their rejecting or forſaking proceeds not from his decree working it, but from their malice and unbeleefe procuring it: But as for the Lord, hee doth not foreſtall or prejudicate the ſpirit of any man to his diſpenſation, but freely, generally and fully offers to all ſorts of ſinners, the benefit of his grace and pardon, who doe not baſely and treacherouſly withdraw themſelves, and cavill againſt his ſimplicity. The Lord doth not put difference in his offer, ſaying, to ſuch or ſuch an one I offer it, to ſuch and ſuch I doe not, he offers alike to all; and although ſome conditions go before the actuall application of the promiſe, yet thoſe conditions are wrought in the ſoule by the offer in all, who doe walke with God in the way of his Ordinances, except they fight and reſiſt the ſame. So then, whoſoever doth not deſpiſe the counſell of God, and thinke himſelf unworthy of ſalvation, but ſhew himſelf of the number of them who are drawne and perſwaded to accept it, he ſhall aſſuredly partake it. So much for the fourth.

2 Cron. 16. 4.

Luke 4.

Fifthly, to come a little nearer, that is, to the reall efficacy of working grace and the obedience of faith, thats eaſie alſo. For why? When as the Lord hath brought the ſoule under the condition of faith, partly by loading the ſame under her miſery; partly by the preſenting to her the ſweetneſſe, gainfulneſſe and faithfulneſſe of the promiſe; and partly by removing all ſuch barres and lets as might diſſwade the ſoul from it; then hereby to ſuch a one, it becomes eaſie to beleeve. And to ſay the truth, to theſe its onely eaſie, in the true kinde and proper ſenſe of eaſineſſe. For why? Theſe are exempted from the common ſort of hearers, to whoſe thoughts the very conceit of faith is a difficult thing, much more the enterpriſe. For alas! Naturally, what in all the world is ſo harſh and unwelcome to our carnall diſpoſition, as to obey the Goſpel? Not to preach, to heare, to give away our wealth, to ſacrifice our children, to keepe the Law, are ſo hard as this: But to ſuch as the Lord hath brought under the authority, love and conduct of the word, and the Spirit of grace working thereby; he makes it ſweet and eaſie. Others plod and take on, make a bungling worke of it, as we ſee untidy ſervants goe awkely about their buſineſſe, which neate and skilfull ones diſpatch at once; but the Lord conducts theſe as a ſhepheard leads his ſheep into the greene paſtures, and as thoſe Iſraelites were led by the pillar of fire and cloud through the wilderneſſe. If a traveller be ſet right on his journey, his eaſe is in his guide: As *Iſaac* ſeeing *Iacob* bring veniſon ſo ſoone, asked him how he came ſo quickly by it? Hee told him, becauſe the Lord thy God brought it to his hand: So hee had no need of *Eſau* his hunting. Now briefly, it ſhall not bee amiſſe to ſhew by what ſteps the Lord makes this worke eaſie and familiar to his people.

5. *Reaſon.* The condition of faith is eaſie to ſuch as belong to election.

Eſay 63. 12. Pſal. 23. 3.

First, as he giveth them a ſweet view of this worke of obeying the Goſpel, that is a cleer & familiar conceiving thereof, ſo that it is not an intricate and wearieſome object: (As *Salomon* deſcribes the way of the ſluggard to be an hedge of thornes, which no man is willing to medle with:) So alſo the Lord brings the ſoule unto the doore of hope,

Cernaine particulars of this holy eaſe. The firſt.

2 Kings

Hoſea 2.

hope, ſhewing it an entrance and a poſſibleneſſe of eſcape, working a knowledge of it, and withall an hearty and cloſe aime and ſympathy to it. It ſo plants the ſoule under the promiſe, that the droppings of Gods myrrhe, oile and balme, do not light beſide it, but right into it. When a man hath got the promiſe of a leaſe; he is ſure of the next vacancy: So men that lay in for an advouzon, waite for the next avoidance. It is a good eaſe for a poore Scholar in the Univerſity to be made a Probationer of the next Fellowſhip (as in ſome Colledges they uſe) for then hee waites in hope, and is eaſed of the hazard of miſſing. Such Probationers and Candidates of heaven, doth the Lord firſt make his poore people, that ſo having an inckling of his meaning, they goe on with ſweetneſſe, becauſe heaven is theirs in the grant and reverſion. As once an holy man told mee, that the Lord intimated his heart with this thought, that if he would ſeeke him faithfully in the meanes, he would ſave him. A marveilous priviledge. So that looke when any grace falls from God, they are the parties whom it will light upon; this takes off an exceeding deale of bondage, and makes meanes ſweet. So it was to them of Ninivee, who upon this hint from God, applyed themſelves to the meanes very carefully. This cauſes the heart to plow with Gods heifer, to finde out his riddle, and to ſee into the myſtery of the promiſe; and therefore to plow indeed and fall to worke, to rend up the fallow grounds of her proud rebellious nature, ſelfe and ſcurffe, to hunger after and ſet a price upon the promiſe, as a pearle above price.

Jona 3.7.8.9. Judg.14. Jer.4.3.

2. In divers points.

Secondly, the Lord makes it an eaſie worke by ſetling the promiſe upon the ſoule, and that by ſundry workes: For firſt, it doth pull up all hedges and fences which ſtopt the ſoules courſe, ſtanding between the ſoule and her harmes, he puts her out of feare, and ſets her out of danger, removes Lions of ſuppoſed difficulty out of her way; as malice of Satan diſmaying, error of the wicked deterring, and ſelfe diſtempers which diſquiet her with doubtings: wee know if a man would goe the next way to a place and avoid dirt and bad way, hee muſt have a guide to lead him by the fields, to pull up gaps, barres and ſtops; which done, the traveller hath great eaſe. So the Lord deales for his, he ſuffers them not to travell tediouſly to heaven; that is the portion of hypocrites who undoe as faſt as they doe, and are ever new to beginne; but to his owne he gives ſweet eaſe in his way. If a man ſhould hold our enemy for us and binde him by ſtrength, it were (as we ſay) five of the ſeven, we might eaſily beat him. Thus our Lord Jeſus bindes Satan and difficulties, that the ſoule might get the better of him, and goe forward without awckneſſe, ſelfe-love or hypocriſie.

Luke 12.

Secondly, the Lord makes the promiſe eaſie, by preſenting to her all the good things of it (as Canaan was ſeene eaſily by *Moſes* when the Lord ſhewed it unto him) and ſo ſets the ſoule in a ſweet courſe: Wee know by experience, when once a man gets the ſavour and ſmack of an object, he goes roundly: A Tradeſman having taſted the reall ſweet of his returne, and a ſcholar of his booke, take ſmall thought to goe through ſtitch. *Paul* in that place to the Corinths, tells us that the Lord hath diffuſed the ſavour of his truth into him, and by him to others. An hypocrite is puzling after it all his life time, but is ſo poiſoned with the more

Deut 34.1,2, 3,4.

2 Cor.2.14.

more welcome ſavours of his pleaſures, gaine and luſts, that he falls ſhort of the grace of God, and as it is Heb. 12. *Eſau* came ſhort of the bleſſing, *Iaacob* came juſt in the way of it and failed not: And this ſavour differs from the decaying and wanzing taſte of temporaries; it abides in the ſoule, and cauſes it to be reſtleſſe, till it poſſeſſe what it ſavours: It is as leven, ſowres the whole lumpe of minde, will, affections.

Thirdly and laſtly, it doth authoriſe, enable and carry the ſoule (as under a ſafe convoy) into the promiſe: So that (without the toile of the wicked) it holds on cheerfully in all thoſe meanes which ſhe muſt uſe, as prayer, meditation, conference, hearing; ſo that ſhe uſes not theſe at had I wiſt, hit they or miſſe they, but as ordinances under the bleſſing of God, which ſhall not returne in vaine: As *Eſay* ſpeakes, The ſnow and the raine returne not in vaine to him that ſent them, but cauſe the earth to bring forth corne to the eater, and ſeed to the ſower: So ſhall my word (ſaith the Lord) not faile of its ſcope, but to doe that for which I ſent it. And ſithence the Lord Jeſus ſpeakes no words in vain, but with the promiſe, addes the performance; therefore the ſoule heares it ſo, takes and findes it ſo; even as the command of Chriſt to the ſicke of the palſey, Be thou cleane, clenſed him forthwith. So then, if the Lord will have it ſo ſweet and eaſie a worke, who ſhall let it? Who ſhall diſanull it? So much for the Reaſons. 3. Eſay 55.9.10.

I proceed to the Uſe. Let this firſt teach us to put a difference between perſons who profeſſe to ſeeke heaven: Whatſoever the world thinkes that all are alike, the matter is nothing ſo: I may ſay of them as the holy Ghoſt ſpeakes of the Jewes in *Eſters* time, when *Hamans* plot was broken, that to the Jewes was a day of gladneſſe and reſt from all their troubles, feaſting and eaſe; but to their enemies the contrary: So I ſay, to all plodding ones and hypocrites, the Lord gives as much toile (and more) for hell, as the godly for heaven; it is their lot, and the portion of their cup: They would never come within the condition or ſuburbes of mercy; but the others lot is fallen into a goodly heritage. It is with them, as it is with two men carried into a field wherein there lies an hidden treaſure: The one is left to ſeeke, to dig, to harpe upon the place by conjecture, and ſo findes it a bootleſſe worke: The other is carried to the place pointed by the finger, and there he digges and findes it. A Scholar in the Univerſity that hath a generall wit for learning, will thrive and get it (although but poorely maintained) when another kept there upon coſty tearmes, wanting ſuch a ſpirit, ſhall plod in vaine. It is only theirs to whom it is given, to whom by covenant it belongs; even ſuch as renouncing themſelves, wholly reſigne up themſelves to him, who can only make it eaſie and ſweet. The elder brother was as near his fathers elbow as could be and alwaies with him; yet it was the lot of the yonger (a prodigall turned to his father) to eat of the fat calfe, to have the ring, robe and ſhooes put on him; it was eaſie for him to be happy, when his father would beteame it him as his lot. When *Sampſons* friends are kept from the riddle, how hard is it in ſeven daies to hit upon it? But when they plowed with his heifer, how eaſily they finde it out, and come to him, ſaying, What is more ſweet then hony? And what more ſtrong then a Lion? When the two Apoſtles, *Peter* and

Vſes.
1. Inſtruct.
2. Branches.

Eſter 9.14. Grace is eaſie to them that are bred for it.

Eccleſ. 2.26.

Pſal. 16.

Simil.

Matth. 13.44.

Matth. 13.11.

Judg. 14.

2 Kings

Paul preached to the Jewes, how they preſſed upon them the offer of ſalvation, becauſe by vertue of the covenant, they were to have the firſt refuſall? Read two places, Act.2. *Peter* tells them, To you and to your children (out of Gods free love) the promiſe belongs and the powrings out of the ſpirit, and to as many as the Lord our God ſhall call. And ſo in the 13. of Acts, To you (brethren, the Jewes at Antioch) is preached by this man forgiveneſſe of ſinnes. It was a great honour though they had not the grace to ſee it: And ſo much more to all under the condition of faith the promiſe belongs, although to ſuch as are under the condition of their own ſtrength, it ſhall be a meer toile and bondage. So much for the firſt inſtruction.

2. Inſtruct.

Queſt. Grace is called by name of a yoake, how then eaſie?

A ſecond ſerves to untie a knot in the ſeeming contradiction of Scriptures. Some preſenting unto us a marveilous eaſe in the yoke of Chriſt and a lightneſſe in his burthen: Others a marveilous difficulty, and ſuch a thing as muſt be ſtriven for, and yet may be miſt.

Anſw. Grace is the hardeſt and the eaſieſt thing of all. Math.19.26.

The anſwer is, Heaven and Grace are both the moſt eaſie, and the moſt difficult that can be; both may well ſtand: They are moſt eaſie to the ſoule which will bee taught of God, and will not reſiſt his method by attending their owne wiſdome: But to others, they are matters of greateſt difficulty: To God all things are poſſible; to fleſh and bloud, to the wit and will of man, to the freedome of our owne choice, nothing is ſo impoſſible. I remember the anſwer of a Philoſopher to a great Prince (who had beene his ſcholar, and was diſcontented at him for publiſhing his bookes) be content, ſaith hee, and know, my bookes of Philoſophy are publiſht and not publiſhed, for none are ere the wiſer for them, ſave thoſe to whom they were read and made evident. So here: The myſtery of Chriſt is the moſt eaſie and the moſt hard; eaſie only to ſuch as in whom the Lord hath opened an eare, Job 33.15. and revealed it, to others hard. So much for Inſtruction.

Vſe 2. Terror to many.

1. Branch. Slighters of the worke of grace, abuſe the doctrine of eaſe.

Secondly, this is Terror to all ſuch libertines and carnall Goſpellers, who make Religion & Faith (great works) light and ſlight matters, running away with them as horſes with empty waggons, not through any eaſe they have by the Spirit, but from the exceſſe and ſuperfluity of their own blindeneſſe and preſumption. Others are blinde, idiots tell them of Regeneration and Converſion, and they run to their own ſtrength, they doe hope well, that if they put their good will to Gods, God will ſo far enable them as to get ſomewhat: They hope men make more ado about matters then God himſelfe: God hath told them, that faith in the promiſe is eaſie, and none of theſe ſowre Preachers ſhall pull this liberty from them, what needs all this adoe? If God be on our ſide, we feare nothing; as long as men walke even and faire, harmeleſſe and devout, bearing a good minde toward God, keepe their Church, and pay all men their dues, and give to the poore; for ought they ſee God is mercifull, will not the death of a ſinner, is found of them that ſought him not: His yoke is eaſie, he ſaith he will not bee alway heavy upon men, he knowes we be no Angels: yea he ſaith, that he hath ſeene the iniquity of mens covetouſneſſe, and hee will heale them and make no more adoe. It is for his glory to bee mercifull. As for theſe Miniſters who ſticke ſo much at the truth of heart, and faith unfaigned, they

Eſay 65.1. Matth.11.29. Eſay 57.17.

ſay,

ſay, onely God knowes the heart, and they trouble mens heads more then they doe them good, making men unquiet, and finding out new crotchets! What is mans life (ſay they) if hee may not bee merry and cheerfull? God loves it, and Chriſt hath dearly bought it, and its beſt to be merry, eat and drinke, and caſt away care. God (ſay theſe) hath made us of bodies as well as ſoules, we be not all ſpirit, nor ſhall be in this world; we muſt tend Sermons ſo as we may tend our worke too, our bodies muſt be made of for God, and what skils it, though we play and be good fellowes, and drinke a cup or two, (ſo it be in the feare of God) although we be none of theſe Puritans, yet wee be not againſt them; we hope by this meanes to ſpend out our ſhort time, having God afore our eies, and to be in heaven ere we be aware. Oh yee wofull creatures! Doe you thus conſtrue Gods eaſe? I aske you, Hath the Lord ever brought you under the bondage of ſpirit, for all your curſed nature and impious prophaneneſſe? Did it ever cut you off from your old ſtocke? Did it ever bring yee under hope? No doubtleſſe: Thinke not then to make faith an eaſie purchaſe upon your owne purſe; it will be one day, in that your laſt night of death and darkeneſſe, ſuch a toileſome journey, through tempeſt and foule weather, dirt and wearineſſe, that you ſhall be quite tired, and then ſhall true toile ſucceed falſe eaſe: Hearken not to that lying ſpirit which beares you in hand, all eaſe, eaſe, for it ſhall turne to extremity of anguiſh, and to a deſperate impoſſibility: The mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it, The Lord indeed moderates the labour of his poore weary travellers to Zion, Pſal. 84. So that they ſhall grow from ſtrength and feele no faintneſſe: But no man ſhall goe up in a feather bed to heaven, if it were ever an eaſie way, it was never eaſie; foolehardy ſtout travellers, which boaſt of their limbes, ſhall faint ſuddenly. Dogs muſt not come with poore children for Gods dole, it belongs not unto them. So much for the firſt Branch. Matth. 15.

Others alſo there are whom this terror reacheth unto: And they are baſe hypocrites, who come with their toile and coſt to God, deviſing painfull and tedious waies of their owne, but ſhunning Gods eaſie way. They will obtrude their whole rivers of oile and wine, and whole barns of corne, for the ſinne of their ſoules; whereas he askes onely a third part of an Hin, and an handfull of flower for a meat offering: A poore thing in Gods way, is better excepted then all exceſſe of our owne. Ye load mee (ſaith God) and peſter me with your offerings, I groane under the burthen of your ſacrifices. Honour me in mine owne way, and I will make it eaſie and ſweet to you: But elſe, the ſand is not more heavy to mens ſhoulders, then you to Gods; you are out of Gods element, therefore every thing is weighty; you may complaine that you are not regarded, but the Lord pitties no toile of hypocrites againſt his word. *Elija* ſhall ſooner conſume the ſacrifice with fire from heaven by ſtanding ſtill, and praying in Gods way, then all *Baals* Prieſts with their lancings and leapings upon the Altar. Coſt without wit is waſte. Its ſaid of *Ionathan* that he had wrought with God that day on which he overcame thoſe Philiſtins. So I ſay, Gods people work with God, (rather he with them) but hypocrites work with themſelves; therefore they lay

2. Branch. Hypocrites who come with their toile and coſt to God, are rejected.

1 King. 18. 28. with 37. 1 Sam.

2 Kings

Esay 55.2. 1 Sam.14.45. 2 Tim 3.7.

lay out their labour for that which profits not, and mony for no bread. They goe againſt the ſtreame, a *Eſau* in his hunting, for the bleſſing went another way with leſſe adoe. As its ſaid in *Timothy*, Alway hearing, never comming to knowledge: Oh the endleſſe bootleſſe toile of hypocrites! You poore aſſes, running the Divells round, and grinding in his mill, with your eyes blindfold, at laſt be ſcared out of your trade! You doe but as *Sampſon*, lay heapes upon heapes, and die of thirſt! Once get into the right way, and undoe ſomewhat firſt, which God would have you forgoe inſtead of your doings; and this will cauſe unto you incredible eaſe and ſweetneſſe in your proceeding. Remember that ſpeech, Eſay 30. your ſtrength ſhall be to ſit ſtill: Sit ſtill and bee quiet therefore in your hypocriticall devotions, and bee ſtirring and working with God under the condition of his promiſe, and your labour ſhall not be loſt in the Lord. Elſe you ſhall ſuffer loſſe not onely of a part, but of the principall; you ſhall ſinke in your ſweat, and the moſt deſpiſed fatherleſſe creatures with their poore emptineſſe, ſcarce daring to lift up eies to heaven, ſtanding afar off, ſhall go away better juſtified then you with all your ſupererogations. And when you are thus defeated, your merits ſhall be in your own hands. So much for this ſecond.

Judg.15.

1 Cor.15.ult.

Luke 18.13.

Vſe 3.

Reproofe.

Sundry branches.

1. The chiefe ſeaſon of eaſe is at firſt.

Thirdly, this Doctrine reproves ſundry ſorts: And firſt, all ſuch as having enjoyed the liberty of Gods Ordinances all their dayes, yet never had the wiſdome to diſcerne that ſpirituall ſeaſon, in which the Lord makes this worke of faith eaſie and welcome. The eaſe of beleeving (in Gods uſuall method) attends a peculiar opportunity of Gods owne vouchſafing, in which he doth more readily worke, then at all other times. Commonly when the word is firſt ſent to a congregation, as a dainty, as a rare and deſired pearle, an object of price: Againe, when the ſpirit of the hearer is carried with violence to carry the Kingdome away, whatſoever paines and charge it coſt them; when alſo the Lord ſends the Angel or Miniſter with a more then common ſpirit of zeale, to ſtir the muddy poole to the bottome, and to unſettle mens hearts frozen upon their dregs: I ſay, when as the Lord inſpires him with the ſpirit of *Eliah* or *Iohn Baptiſt*, with ſpeciall love to the pretious ſoules of men, with laborioufneſſe and the ſpirit of convincing: when as the Goſpel drawes all ſorts unto it, by the fervency of affections and examples of ſuch as make toward it, then there is eaſe in beleeving. Not when the Goſpel is waxen ſtale in a Towne, and Manna plentifull, which commonly cauſes loathing and fulſomeneſſe: Not when the hearers heart is ſunke and dead in his breſt, indifferent whether he ſpeed or no: Not when the ſpirits of the Miniſters of God wax dull, as *Moſes* hands with long holding up: Not when the Spirit of grace, of power, melting, drawing and perſwading, begins to flag: And (as *Micah* ſaith) is ſtraitned: Not when the hearts of Miniſters faint in them and turne another way: Not when they are driven out from their places, and are faine to ſeeke into remote Countries: Not when the affections of people wax generally dead, and careleſſe which end goe forward, rather minding their owne world, will and ends, then the matters of ſalvation.

Mica 2.6.

When theſe markes fall out, the ſhadowes of the mountaines wax long,

long, the wild Beaſts goe out of their dennes to ſpoile, and the labourers turne their backes upon their worke, becauſe the Sunne is downe. Not in theſe ſeaſons, not in death, deepe ſickneſſes, croſſes, feares, loſſes, is there like to be found this eaſe I ſpeake of? And therefore, Oh you (my brethen who heare me this day!) who have long lived here under the meanes, (above fifty yeares) thinke ſeriouſly of your eſtate. If yet the worke of beleeving the promiſe be undone, if you have outbidden and ſurvived all theſe happy ſeaſons, (wherein your owne ſoules know you felt ſuch dampings of corruption, raiſings of heart, thawings, inclinings and movings of ſpirit, to embrace the offer of ſalvation) and have fallen to the world, to pleaſures, to eaſe, and (as *Cain* did) being caſt out of Gods preſence, to goe and build Cities: Let my words now pierce you (if any tenderneſſe at roote remaine in you) and take heed leſt if ever you finde God gracious, (if he have not quite caſt you off for your dallying) you be put to toile and travell for it, leſt it coſt you tenne times as much trouble as you might firſt have had it for. The Lord is hardly drawne to returne to a particular man, when he hath left a publique place: I tell you, if you have ſlighted ſuch meanes and ſeaſons as theſe, it muſt be the unſpeakeable patience of God which can pull you home at laſt: It were ſtrange if a man who hath loſt his faire or market, ſhould come many daies after and meet with thoſe commodities which hee wants, then he might have ſtored himſelfe with eaſe, but after with much hazard and coſt.

Speciall application to the preſent people.

You have had your ſeaſon, your accepted time and day of ſalvation; many hundreds have beleeved and ſet ſeale to the grace offered, and moſt of them are at reſt with God. If you bee thoſe unhappy ones who have received it all this while in vaine, I doubt whether ever any new appetite will be lent you, and although it were, I doubt whether (the doores being ſhut) you ſhall ſpeed of your deſire (though you ſhould runne from Barwicke to Dover, from old England into new for it) or be admitted to beleeve: Oh! How ſhall I ſpeake to this wofull place for the padling out of her ſeaſon of eaſe? God hath brought ſalvation to your doores, as to the children of the Kingdome, pind it on your ſleeves, I may truly (and in a good time) ſpeake it, The Goſpel hath alway brought you more gaine then it hath coſt you: Pulpits have beene, as it were, ſet up in your ſtreets by your houſes, (ſo neere is the grace of God come unto you;) and when others have ridden and trotted five, ten, fifteene miles, you have had it at home, for ſtepping in at the doores; floods of butter and oile have flowed downe in your brooks and ſtreets, and thouſands have beene ſatisfied with your leavings: You have been as free borne to the Goſpel; What (in all the world) ſhall you pretend for your ſelves, if you have never had (I ſay not the beſt portion) but any part at all of it: Oh! that I could teach you, (after all my preſſing of the promiſe among you) how to diſpute for your ſelves? But that exceeds my skill; you have had a fee-ſimple, an inheritance of the Goſpel, you have beene married to the Lord, under long, conſtant, unwearied, plaine and powerfull meanes, long ere I came among you: All mens gifts have ſerved you, you have entred into other mens labours. I may adde this, that you have poſſeſſed

Hard for long dalliers with God, to recover him again at their pleaſure or leaſure.

Note you of the congregation.

2 Kings

fields, vineyards and orchards, which you never knew the price of; never bought tilled or planted. For my ſelfe although I have long lived unprofitable, yet if ever God lent me any fitneſſe to doe you good, it hath beene ſince I came among you: And yet ſome of you, through lazineſſe, worldlineſſe, love of your ſhops, formality, neglect of meditation: Others through a curſt ſullen heart, ſnuffing at the Miniſtry, ſtumbling at the ſtone of offence, but the moſt from a cloy'd and ſurfeited ſtomacke with much food, have never come to taſte the eaſe of mercy. If ſome few have, truly, either they have little elſe to take too, or elſe God hath pickt them out as odde ones here and there; and what may become of ſome of theſe when meanes ſhall faile, God knoweth! But now even at this laſt caſt and farewell, for Gods ſake, come in and dally no longer, and breake through all your luſts for this promiſe! It ſhall vex ye as fire one day, to thinke of this, how fooliſhly did I miſſe of heaven? When I might have had it with eaſe, then to loſe it for a baſe luſt, a vanity, which ſhall leave me empty, Oh foole in kinde! The Lord move your hearts! So much for this firſt branch of Reproofe.

2. Branch. Deny ſelfe-eaſe for Gods eaſe.

Eſay 50. ult.

Verſ. 10.

Secondly, here is reproofe for all ſuch as have foreſtalled this bleſſed eaſe of God, by leaning to their owne ſtrength, zeale and affections. I have beat much upon this: Now I ſay no more but this. Wonder not if your lives bee full of complaints! Oh ye, ſaith *Eſay*! who kindle a fire of your rotten ſticks, and compaſſe your ſelves with your owne ſparkles, much good doe it you with your owne light and heate, but you ſhall have this at mine hand, you ſhall lye downe in ſorrow! Is it a ſmall ſinne that turnes Gods eaſe into miſery? No ſurely. A viper ſhall come forth of your owne heat and ſting you to death without repentance! Who is he among you that feares the Lord and obeyes the voice of his ſervants, that walkes in the darkeneſſe and hath no light! Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay himſelfe upon his God: And ſo doing, he will doe his worke for him. Get once the ſlight of it (as we ſay) and then halfe the worke is at an end: Lay downe rather your owne ſpirits and ſparkles, good deeds and affections, rather then take them up to demerit God and reſiſt his eaſe: And ſo by denying your ſelves, here on the left hand in your vices, there on the right in your vertues and praiſes, ſucking out an humble heart out of the promiſe, (for alas! what needed the coſt of Chriſt, if your coſt could ſerve the turne) you ſhall finde your ſelves to profit more by one Sermon, then you have done by tenne. So much for this ſecond Branch.

3. Branch. Preachers of carnall eaſe who ſow pillowes.

Thirdly, this reproves all ſuch Miniſters as turne this true and ſpirituall eaſe of God into a carnall liberty, and ſmoothing their ignorant and prophane people, yea ſowing pillowes of fleſhly eaſe under their elbowes; telling them they are in good eaſe, and theſe Preachers ſcare them with falſe fires; for Gods yoake is eaſie, Chriſt came to deſtroy the hard Law, &c. And the ground of this practice is either idleneſſe, to ſpare themſelves a labour, or through prophaneneſſe, or through Gods juſt judgement to give them teachers ſuch as themſelves are, to cauſe them to ſtumble and fall, and riſe no more, and all becauſe they have rejected better meanes. And others Pelagian wiſe, teach

that

that there is an univerſall ſufficient grace offered in the Goſpel which alſo is effectuall, except men reſiſt it, and that they have free will to accept and embrace it. As for the doctrine of Gods peculiar eaſe of perſwading ſome more then others, they cannot endure it. They teach the people to ſay to God, as thoſe in *Eſay* are brought in, ſaying to one man, doe but beare our name and owne us, and we will be at our owne findings, thou ſhalt not be troubled with our maintenance, we will bee fed, apparrelled and ſupported by our owne meanes and moneies. So ſay theſe to Chriſt, beare our name for faſhion, and obtaine a generall pardon by the merit of thy bloud, and as for the application of it let us alone, we will finde ſtrength by our owne free concurrence with the grace offered, to faſten upon and apply it to our ſelves. And ſo if there fall out to be any defect herein, it is no want of the accommodation of grace to us, (for that is equall to all) but our accommodation to it in ſuch a due ſeaſon, matter or other circumſtances, as if they had beene concurring, might have produced a perſwaſion to receive the grace offered. To all which, I anſwer, ſuch eaſe as this in obeying the command of beleeving, the orthodox Church of God know none: The eaſe that is, is on Gods part, preventing, aſſiſting and perfecting, and from none of ours. To us, the work is abſolutely impoſſible. So much for this third Branch, and ſo for this third Uſe of Reproofe.

Pelagian eaſe of ſelfe-converſion, and of free-will confuted.

Vſe 4. Exhortation. In ſundry Branches. Such as have found eaſe in a Gods way are thankfull.

The fourth Uſe ſhould be Exhortation, and that many fold. Firſt, to all Gods poore ſervants, who have found Gods way ſweetned thus and eaſed by the Lord, that they be very thankefull for this ſpeciall favour. Say thus, who am I whom thou ſhouldeſt make that ſweet and eaſie unto, which to others thou ſuffereſt to bee toileſome? Thou mighteſt have brought mee as hardly to heaven as others, there is not a prouder, tougher moulded wretch of an hundred then I have beene, yet thy milde and gentle cords of allurement have been ſtrange to me! Thou haſt pull'd me with the cords of a man, made love to me even in the wilderneſſe, forelaid my way ſweetly, brought me into the net ere I was aware, concealed difficulties while afterward, mittigated my horrors, gone leaſurely on with me, drop upon drop, line upon line, not gugged me too deeply with my luſts, not ſuffered me to revolt to my old courſes; thou haſt laid no heavy burthens upon my ſhoulders, required no toile of ſervice; thou haſt given me an hope of ſucceſſe from the beginning, ſo that I have gone to worke with hope, beene freed from exceſſive feares, temptations, croſſes, diſcouragements, which many others are basked withall. For my part I know no reaſon, and I can but wonder, that thou ſhouldeſt doe as thou haſt (which I cannot deny without lying) to one ſo hollow, inconſtant and perverſe, as I know my ſelfe to be. It pleaſes thee to hold me faſt to thoſe ſteps to which thou haſt brought me, and to try mee no deeplier then thou giveſt light and ſtrength to reſolve and revive mee againe. Methinkes, thou haſt made the whole myſtery of Chriſt ſenſible and lively to me in the ground of it, the merit, thy ſcope (which is to magnifie thy ſelfe in the hearts of thine) and my heart hath found ſome ſweetneſſe in it, found it day by day more lightſome and ſweet: As the loadſtone holds iron to it ſelfe, ſo I have felt thy promiſe to draw me,

Jer. 2. 3. 4.

ſo

2 Kings

ſo that I cannot give it over, nor forſake the meanes, but they are daily ſweeter and ſweeter to me. I have not felt ſuch temptations to hideous thoughts & luſts as ſome have done: I am not diſquieted ſo much about the meaſure of my preparations as ſome have been, from my youth up, thou haſt by ſteps and degrees wrought that which thou art faine to worke in others by violence and with difficulties: Nothing but exceſſe of clemency and mercy hath beene my portion; and yet in all, I have held ſome good teſtimony in my owne heart of ſincere and plaine intentions, although feeble, yet faithfull. Oh bleſſe the Lord!

Pitty ſuch as get to heaven with difficulties.

As for others, whoſe birth coſts more travell and paines, pitty them the rather, and confeſſe thou oweſt them ſo much the more compaſſion by how much they come harder to heaven then thou doſt. We ſee an heire toiles not ſo much for all his inheritance, as a poore labourer for a groat a day. Doth the poore man murmure at him? No, but puts himſelfe under providence which hath made ſome owners, ſome tenants, ſome to live at more eaſe, others with more toile: The Lord is the maker of both, and perhaps foreſees, that if the poore had as the rich, he would beare it worſe, and therefore his rough ſpirit muſt bee basked and held downe from pride and rebellion. Let not ſuch as meet with more hardſhip in their converſion accuſe God, for changing eaſe into toile: Let them not murmure at *Lydia*, at *Zachee* and ſuch as have beene eaſily brought home; but bleſſe God that he would trouble himſelfe with ſuch peeces as they, rather then burne them as knotty logs ſcarce worth the hewing, and beſtow any coſt upon them for his owne names ſake, rather then they ſhould periſh: But let them be farre from cavilling at God that they have abode the heate of the day, and others comming in at the eleventh houre have fared as well? Is thy penny the worſe ſilver for theirs? Or is thine eie evill becauſe Gods is good? wonder rather that ever that penny ſhould come in thy purſe, then that others fare as well, or that thou fareſt not better! So much for this Branch.

Matth.20.15.

2. Branch. Beware leſt the eaſe of the firſt mercy, cauſe thee after to ſlight it.

Secondly, let this be an admonition unto thee for the time to come, that this eaſe of the firſt mercy, become not a ſnare unto thee afterward to cauſe thee to ſlight it and forget it. Doe not as wanton heires, who ſpend it as lightly and baſely, as it came eaſily: Leſt the Lord make your hearts ake for it, and ſet you on the racke, teaching you to repent and to keep within bounds. Oh! abuſe not this goodneſſe, ſlight it not, walke not ſlackly, ſit not looſe upon eaſie mercy; devote thy ſelfe rather to God, for ſo free, ſweet eaſie mercy, with the moſt cloſe faithfull heart, thinking nothing too deare for him. *David* could breake forth Pſal.43. ult. iuto great triumphs, after a tedious conflict and combat with his fears, doubts & depth of heavines, and ſay, I will ſtill praiſe him who is the health of my countenance and my God: And ſhalt not thou ſay ſo much more, who haſt eſcaped many ſuch ſcourings? Doe not now thinke thou art ſafe, thou maiſt heare, pray, receive the ſacraments as looſely and formally as thou wilt, becauſe grace came eaſily: No, make the more precious account of it; elſe thou art a ſlave and no Sonne. An heire ſeeing himſelfe ſtockt by his father, with ſweet dwelling, rich grounds, great revenues, ſo that he needs not to carke and toile

toile for a living: What doth he? Surely as the Lord bids the Iſraelites, who came into a land flowing with milke and hony, and that at the beſt vantage, even in the harveſt of all commodities: Beware leſt now yee forget the Lord that hath thus endowed and furniſhed you: Walke humbly, and feare the Lord that it may goe well with you: So ſhould we doe; we ſhould ſay, now all other things are done to mine hand, there is but one thing to doe, Lord teach me to do it well; If I can be full and yet remember the Lord that made me, and highly eſteem the rocke of my ſalvation, he will thinke them well beſtowed, and confirme them to me, elſe they ſhall be a ſnare.

Fall not to *Adams* and *Eves* ſinne, who in the abundance of all things, being ſet in a Paradiſe, could not digeſt their happineſſe, but fell to revolt, and ſo were caſt out. Say not, Soule, eat, drinke, be merry, cry not, peace, peace; but let the eaſe of mercy keepe thy ſoul from all preſuming and ſenſuall ſecurity. Remember that bitter pill given by our Lord Jeſus to a looſe one, whoſe cure coſt him nothing, & ſo he began to play his parts: Thou art healed, now ſin no more leſt a worſe thing befall thee, and then thou wilt wiſh, would I had lien lame by the poole ſtill! We are ſcarce able (brethren) to beare the eaſe of mercy but we wax wanton, and that is the cauſe why ſo few finde it, and ſo many complaine of ſuch difficulties: It is juſt with God to make us weare the chaine for it, to teach us to walke before the Lord more humbly and ſoberly. And ſo much for the ſecond Branch of the Exhortation. I ſhould now have concluded the Uſe with the third and laſt Branch, that we walke in the experience of this bleſſed eaſe, to truſt God forth on for the like goodneſſe. But the time is ſpent: Let us cut off here and call upon God, &c.

2 Kings

But rather knit the heart to God. Joſhua 5.11.

Deut. 32.14.

John 5.

THE

THE FOVRTEENTH LECTVRE

Still continued upon this thirteenth VERSE.

VERSE XIII.

And his ſervants came neere, and ſaid unto him, Father, if the Prophet had bid thee doe ſome great thing, wouldeſt thou not have done it? How much more then, when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh and be clean?

VERSE 14. *So he went downe and dipped himſelfe in Iorden ſeven times, &c.*

2. Kings

Gave you an hint briefly (beloved in our Saviour) when I laſt ended the former Sermon, what I would have proceeded with, if time had permitted. I have ſhewed you, That the beleeving of Gods promiſe (to ſuch as are in caſe) is an eaſie thing. Sundry grounds and Scriptures I cleered the truth by, and ſundry Uſes of Inſtruction, of Terror, of Reproofe, and of Exhortation I have added. And to this laſt (wherein two branches were urged then) belongs a third, that is, That all who have found this handfull of eaſe, in beleeving pardon, ſhould be earneſt with God for the eaſe and ſweetneſſe of an holy courſe, that the yoake of God may become eaſie and his burthen light. Say thus unto the Lord, Hitherto thou haſt dealt with thy ſervant in mercy, thou haſt not laid heavy taskes upon me; I cannot accuſe thee (like an hypocrite) that thou haſt taken up where thou haſt not ſtrawed, nor reaped where thou haſt not ſowne: Rather I may ſay, that others have laboured, and I am entred into their labours, that is, found a ſweet and eaſie work of beleeving. Now as I bleſſe thee for this, ſo yet, be not angry with me, if I have another requeſt to make unto thee, and that is, that thou wouldeſt ſtill hold the like hand towards

3. Branch. The eaſe of mercy ſhould make Gods yoake light for ever after.

Matth. 25. 24.

wards me, in making the life of faith ſweet unto me, and the courſe of obedience moſt welcome and familiar. Oh! let it be no harſh thing unto me to beleeve all thy other promiſes, concerning ſtrength againſt tentations, power againſt my luſts: Lord let not the difficulty of walking be as great, as the eaſe of converſion was mercifull; juſt it were with thee to make it ſo, and to try me what ſoundneſſe, what uprightneſſe were in me by hard trialls: But oh! lead me not into tentation, do not ſuffer my corruptions to wax ſtronger then I can maſter, nor Satan to be more fierce and fiery in his darts then I can reſiſt or quench: I doe not pray againſt croſſes or aſſaults, but that they may be according to man, and that an iſſue may be given with them, that I may ſay, thou haſt been afflicted with me in all my afflictions, to make them tolerable, by thy meekeneſſe, confidence, patience and courage put into me: Let the Angel of thy preſence ſave me and conduct me, beare me up by thy hand continually, and redeeme me out of them all at laſt in an happy manner; give me O Lord, both the upper and the nether ſprings, enlarge my coaſt, and be with me againſt thoſe Canaanites of the mountaines, who have iron chariots! If thou ſhalt indeed bleſſe me (as *Iabez* ſaid) thou ſhalt be my God, 1 Chron. 4. 10. Teach me mercy to the diſtreſſed, patience in affliction, faith in ſtraits, ſoberneſſe in bleſſings, faithfulneſſe, if a Miniſter, ſubjection, if a wife, underſtanding, if an husband, dutifulneſſe, if a child, truſtineſſe, if a ſervant, and let there be ſweet eaſe in all theſe.

Luſt is ſweet (Lord) to my unmortified part, but preſent thou ſuch a prevailing ſweetneſſe in thy love by thy promiſe, that it may bear down the corrupt pleaſure of my ſinne; ſo that, while thy love and the joy of thy countenance is preſent, the image of ſuch ſcurfe may bee deſpiſed, and it may not be tedious to mee to reject the tentations to wrath, revenge, earthlineſſe, looſeneſſe in liberties, pride, vanity: But all theſe may become bitter to mee, thy grace making them ſo! Oh (brethren!) the Lord teach you to thinke of this: Strange it is, how many of us goe to worke with God in the way of our converſation, eſpecially if private, ſolemne, dangerous, diſgraced, hard duties be urged, wee finde our hearts ſo ſullen, weary, hollow, fickle, carnall in any duty which concernes us, as if God were highly beholding to us for our worke. What then ſhould be the pitch of our ambition with God, ſave that ſtill he would carry us upon Eagles wings, hide all difficulty of Religion from us, preſent it to us as a ſweet object, remove our waywardneſſe of will, and fill us with love, that wee comprehending the length, depth and height of it, might be filled with his fulneſſe, and be carried on without any great rubs, or ſad offences, that out heads may not be brought to our graves with ſorrow, but wee may finiſh our courſe with joy. *David* in that Pſalme 27. 4. having found one mercy with God, ſtaies not there, but laies in for a new: What is that? One thing I will aske of God that he will not deny me, That I may walke and ſpend all my daies in his houſe continually: A child findes it no trouble to him to walke in the preſence of a loving father, who pitties and provides for him! So ſhouldeſt thou. Mourne thus, if ever any thing come between my ſoul and eaſe; it will be this treacherous heart which

2 Kings

Gen. 18. 30. And breed experience for time to come.

Eſay 63. 9.

Judg. 1. 15.

2 Kings

Esay 38.

which will come to a point! Its that which so manacles and pinions my soule, that I cannot reach that liberty and joy which thy servants feele! Its that (Lord) which makes me so darke, so lowring, discontent, unfruitfull and sad! Oh Lord! ease me here, these have oppressed me, deliver me! I doe not lay in, for liberty to the lusts of the flesh, to fulfill them, I desire the curbing and destruction of them for ever, and their wasting daily! But till thy sweetnesse satisfie my soule, and soake me to the rootes, I shall never be as I would be, nor can thy worke bee as it ought to be! Accept therefore first, the will for the deed, a little for much, that shall be one vantage. Then againe, cover and hide defects, and looke upon my better part, thine owne grace, and not my corruption, interpret me with favour to the uttermost. Then thirdly, betrust me with those principles of love and sincerity, which will make a little goe a great way: And then make my lusts to be my clogs, and as *Sauls* armour upon *Davids* backe, who could not goe with them: And to conclude, make the yoake of thine afflictions easie, and enlarge me to runne the way of thy commandements with cheerfulnesse. So much for this third Branch.

Pray for five things to make Religion sweet.
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

4. Branch. Nourish not feares about the way of God.

But there is yet a fourth branch of Exhortation behinde, flowing more necessarily from this Doctrine, then any of the former: And that is this, That seeing the people of God, have an allowance from God of ease in beleeving: Therefore let all poore soules set their hearts at rest, and not nourish fears within themselves of a more tedious entrance into the Kingdome of Grace, then the Lord hath promised. Nay rather, let them fasten upon this priviledge, not looking at themselves, but at him, who hath all impossibilities at his becke, and can turne them to ease. In which respect *Abraham* is said to beleeve, that (although in shew *Sara's* wombe was to be barren, yet) becaus God was able to make good his word, therefore from one who was as dead, should issue thousands. Thus faith gives glory to God, and drownes her owne fears in his power: True it is, wee cannot beleeve that God will make his promise easie till we beleeve: But one excellent argument to draw us to beleeve, is, the meditation of it as an easie worke, and that the Lord can and will make it so. As I noted before, the cause why so many start and shrinke from the way of God, is the conceit of the most noysome and tedious hardnesse of it. The sluggard still cries, A Lion is in the way, I dare not goe. Take we heed of this bondage: Wee cannot dishonour God more deadly, then by an ill conceit of him, and his method of beleeving. For wisdome is easie to him that loveth understanding; if God will make it so, why shouldest thou gainsay it? A lowring, sullen heart, causeth this slavery in us; wee are willing to beleeve that which we wish; but looke what we have small list unto, that we naturally frame to our selves very difficult. Strive first to get a true judgement of the way of conversion, that the Lord hath said its easie. Its that which *Naamans* servants here labour to beat into their Master, and by it prevailed with him for the obeying of the promise. Next strive to get under the condition of it, for all such are at next door to it. To this end, instead of studying thy selfe and thine owne abilities, study the promise, and let that draw thee to be in love with him, who hath so

Proverb.

Counsells against this disease.
1.
2.

ſo freely offered it; that will winne thy affections to it; and when thy heart is taken with it, thou ſhalt ſoone be on thornes to enjoy it. The eaſe of beleeving iſſues from the ſoules getting under the condition of the promiſe. Touching which point, becauſe it will offer it ſelfe in the next verſe more fully, I ſay the leſſe here. That which in a word I will preſſe here (and ſo finiſh) is this, Reſiſt faiths enemy which is bondage, 3.
an ill opinion of God, a conceit that he love, our toile and vexation; and nouriſh faiths friend, which is Gods eaſe, and that he is no hard Maſter, no tyrant, no taske-maſter, but one that delights in a cheerfull obeyer, and faith will follow ſweetly. God loves one that will not bee ſcared away with Lions and Beares, but come to God for eaſe with aſſurance, that its eaſie for him to give: The cauſe why there is ſuch difficulty in beleeving, comes not from God; but it comes from our falſe opinion and a ſtrange conceit that all pretious things muſt bee difficult.

It coſts the Lord exceeding paines to baniſh out this error, which if it were once overcome, its not to be ſaid, what incredible eaſe would appeare: Therefore let thy courſe (poore ſoule) be, to beg of God the 4.
benefit of this eaſe, pray to him and ſay, If the way to heaven be of thy meer inventing, if the Lord Jeſus himſelf be thy free gift, if the offer of him to a loaden heart be free and voluntary, if the gift of faith it ſelf be thine, and thou haſt bound thy ſelf both to give feet to come and to give eaſe to the ſoule that commeth, where lies the difficulty? Surely in the ſlaviſh heart, which feares where no feare is, which judges of God according to her owne ſenſe. Now to ſenſe and fleſh who dare ſay, or when did ever God ſay faith was eaſie? Come to him then and importune him for this eaſe: Lord take away my ſlaviſh heart, I have wofull experience, what my moyling and toyling wit and courſe is able to doe: At the firſt, I liked it well as mine owne ſtrength; but now I am tired with it; I ſee its thy plague, thou giveſt toyle to the wicked, but to the good and pleaſing in thy ſight, eaſe and reſt: To hunt and to roſt that they have got in hunting, to labour moderately, and to eat of the fruit thereof: Oh this bleſſing I want! Lord, all the fiſh in the ſea are at thy call, thou canſt in a moment gather them all together into one place: Luke 5. Joh. ult. Gen. 18. 14.
Thou canſt bid *Peter* ſpread his net, juſt where they are, and encloſe multitudes in it, after he had fiſhed all night and catcht nothing. Alas! he caſt out his net on the wrong ſide all the while; but when the Lord Jeſus came, then he caſt on the right ſide, and catcht abundance. At thy command Lord, a dead heart ſhall be quickned, a dead wombe ſhall conceive, a creeple of thirty eight yeares ſhall be healed, and what hard thing hath not turned eaſie at thy command?

What was eaſier then to goe through the red ſea firſt, and then Jorden dryſhod, when thou cauſedſt the windes to keep up the waters like two walls on both ſides, and to dry up the mud in the midſt? What is hard ſave becauſe of lets? And what is not eaſie if barres be removed? Oh therefore Lord! thou who by that miracle madeſt *Peter* a Preacher, and gaveſt him a ſigne that he ſhould be a fiſher of men, and encloſe three thouſand at one Sermon; teach me this bleſſed gift, make me ſuch a Preacher of reconciliation by thy skill and eaſe: And thou Act. 2.

2 Kings

who broughteſt all fiſhes under the net, bee not diſcouraged by my ſhineſſe, feare and loathneſſe to bee driven in: Say but the word, and I ſhall come under it, and thy Miniſter ſhall caſt out on the right ſide and encloſe me! Oh happy ſoule! if after all my tricks and wiles to ſhunne thee, thou ſhalt at the laſt, make my will willing, and cauſe me to come under the ſweet and yet authority of thy promiſe: I crave not *Lydia's* eaſe, *Zachees* eaſe, I know now thy courſe is more leaſurely: I doe not ſo much ſeeke ſhortneſſe of labour, as ſweetneſſe of ſpirit, and meekeneſſe of heart, and ſureneſſe of ſucceſſe, and riddance of my baſeneſſe and contradictions: The wilderneſſe ſhall be as welcome to me, as the way of the Philiſtins, if thou wilt tame my rebellions, and give me a pledge of Canaan at laſt! The Lord will not ſtop his eare to ſuch a prayer; mercy pleaſeth him, and the eaſe of mercy pleaſeth him; what ſhould hinder him from giving that which pleaſeth him? Onely our owne eaſe ſet up againſt his, makes the way to heaven tedious, if that be removed, heaven will bee as eaſie as this cure was by waſhing in Jorden. So much for this laſt Branch, as alſo for the whole Uſe.

Uſe 5. Admonition. Wiſdome is needfull to judge of the eaſe of grace,

I proceed now to the fifth Uſe which is Admonition and Caveat: *viz.* That notwithſtanding all which hath beene ſaid about this point, yet that we be wiſe and diſcreet in our judgements, both concerning Gods diverſity of diſpenſation, and concerning the eſtates of men. For the firſt, although I have ſaid nothing but the truth of God hitherto, yet this muſt not breed ill bloud in us, when we conſider his caſting off thouſands, yea millions of people, both ſuch as are without the pale of the Church, and ſuch as are viſible members by Baptiſme: It may ariſe in the mindes of ſome to thinke, that if the way of God were eaſie, why ſhould the Lord hide it from ſo many generations, from the beginning till now, (for ought we know) among Pagans and Infidels? And why ſhould ſo many among our ſelves after their long knowledge and uſe of meanes, yet finde it ſo hard a taske and come ſhort of it when all is done? The anſwer whereto is, That the ſecret waies of God are not for us to deſcant upon: If he will conceale this way of his from many for ſpeciall cauſe, we muſt ſay, Knowne unto the Lord are all his wayes and workes from the beginning. Hebrew, Greeke and Latine are things eaſie and familiar to ſome children, but they who never had training, never come to know them; they are theirs whoſe lot it was to have good education. Its the lot of ſome Countries to have plentifull Mines of gold and ſilver, and its no hard matter for ſuch to dig it out of the earth: But they whoſe lot it is to have no ſuch priviledge, know not what the eaſe thereof meanes. Therefore the wofull forſaking of them, and paſſing by thoſe times of ignorance, muſt not make us thinke, that thoſe to whom the Lord reveales it, finde it to be a difficulty. Its eaſie onely to ſuch as the Lord makes it ſo; Whom he will he ſhewes mercy unto, and whom he will he hardneth. Such ſecrets as theſe muſt be trembled at and adored, not deſcanted; rather thoſe whoſe portion it is to bee ſo mildly and eaſily drawne home to God, ſhould applaud and magnifie his goodneſſe to them as a peculiar priviledge, and ſay, He hath not done thus to every Nation; neither

Act. 15. 18.

Judge not raſhly either of Gods publicke,

Act. 17. 30.

have

have all knowne his wayes. That which hath beene impoſſible for ſome to reach unto, we have beene borne unto as free men, and have found it eaſie and ſweet unto us.

Secondly, let not us judge the eſtates of ſuch, as whom the Lord hath exerciſed with long difficulties in this point of beleeving: I need not inſtance: Its well knowne to all that obſerve Gods government, how different it is in this kinde; how ſweetly and ſafely the Lord hath drawne and carryed on the courſe of ſome of his ſervants with eaſe and comfort: And yet, how many others, not inferior in grace unto them, have beene brought through a thicket to heaven. Paradiſe and Purgatory are not more contrary notions, then the eſtates of theſe two. How many holy men Preachers and others have led wearieſome dayes, nights and yeares, in their conflict and continuall combat of their unbeleefe? How intricate hath Satan and Melancholy made their conditions, that they have thought it as impoſſible for them to beleeve, as to climbe up to the clouds? The Lord knowes why he ſuffers ſuch holy, humble and hungry ſoules to be ſo long tozed and diſquieted without eaſe; ſome to ſee ſinne more bitter in the croſſe and curſe of Chriſt, then in all legall terrors, and ſome to dye ſo; not to teach us to judge them (for no doubt they are comprehended of him, whom they comprehend not) but to tremble and adore the Soveraignty of God, who will as it were ſtep out of his courſe when he pleaſeth, and is bound to none, and hath it in his owne hands, how and by what way hee will bring his to heaven. So much for this fifth Uſe.

Or private adminiſtrations.

Phil. 3.

Laſtly, this ſhould be Encouragement and Comfort: That although the helpes and meanes under which they live are poore, their wits ſilly, their memories weake, their courage ſmall, their feares great, the Divell mighty to beat them off, their friends ready to diſcourage, and above all, their own hearts moſt ready to diſmay and give them the ſlip; yet the Lord having drawn them truly to ſeek him, he can make the way eaſie, and can fight as well with few as with many: He can make a way through Euphrates for his remnant to returne by, as *Eſay* ſaith, His bare word ſpeaking cauſeth the light to appeare, 2 Cor. 4. 6. and one word of his mouth will cauſe the light of grace to ſhine in the heart, and ſcatter all darkeneſſe at once. Oh! how ſhalt thou hold up thine head before the Lord when he hath made thy way eaſie, if thou by thy baſe ſloth and preſumption, or ſtoutneſſe and rebellion, or by the minding of other traſh, ſhalt make thy ſelfe uncapable of it? When the Lord promiſes to carry thine Arke above all rocks and mountaines, and to ſet it downe at length in ſafety upon dry land, that yet thou wilt not betruſt thy ſelfe to it, nor reſigne up thy feares unto him! Oh, thou ſhalt be ſpeechleſſe when the Lord comes againſt thee! Therefore (to finiſh the point) beare thy ſelfe upon this ſweet priviledge of eaſe and enjoy it; was not *Ruth* willing to enjoy the favour of eaſie gleaning? Did ſhe reject the eaſe which *Boaz* his favour allowed her, in ſuffering the eares of corne to be ſcattered before her by handfulls? No ſurely, ſhe and her mother both tooke it as from God. Say thus, I thinke it was thy good will and pleaſure (Lord) to have it thus, elſe it ſhould never have beene, thou meanteſt love to me, elſe I ſhould have made no ſuch

Verſe 6. Comfort and encouragement to poore ſoules by this eaſe.

Ruth 2. 16. & 3. 13.

2 Kings

earnings of it: But seeing thou wilt have it so, shall I reject it? No, but rather draw others by thine experience to seeke the like.

2 King.7. Ease makes men very ready to talke. The two lepers having found such an easie booty, could not bee quiet till they had declared it to the Kings house; declare it thou to thy wife, to thy poore children, let it be as a loadstone to pull their hearts to the promise, Come my child, I see thou fearest thou shalt never get any thing; but looke not thou at thine owne awckenesse, looke at the Lords ease: I looked to have met with as hard a bargaine of it as ever did any; but no sooner had the Lord tired me with mine owne wrastlings, and humbled me under the hope of his sweet ease, but my chiefe worke was over. Even so, get downe thy heart, subdue it to Gods promise, and all shall be sweet and easie. If a Lady being sued too by a King to be his wife, should answer, were I a Queene I would soone hearken: but alas I am a poore Lady! Would the King affect her? No surely; the marrying of a King will make a Queen of it selfe. *Abigail* hearing that *David* had sent for her to be his wife, made a great matter of it, but seeing he would needs have it so, rejected it not, though she was not meet to wash the feet of his servants: And *David* though he said, Seems it an easie thing unto you to be the Kings sonne in law? Yet refused not finally to bee so when it was put upon, but accepted it with gladnesse. No man willingly stands in the light of his owne lawfull preferment, save a foole. And so much for this last Use, and for the whole Doctrine, grounded upon this first Argument of the Servants.

1 Sam.25.

1 Sam.18.23.

The second argument of the servants: Naamans love and respect to Elisha.

Now I proceed to the second: And that is the love, esteeme and repute wherein their Master formerly had had the Prophet. They saw it now to bee weakened through prejudice, therefore they put him in minde of it, and (as in the next point we shall heare) doe rectifie him in that error. But for the present, the argument (coucht secretly) is this, If thou lovest and esteemest the Prophet really, obey him and bee ruled by him: thou wouldest have done any thing he should bid thee, because of the honour thou barest him. Doe so still, if thou love him, obey his counsell. This their argument breakes it selfe into two parts: First, into a ground of reason. Secondly, into the reason following upon it. The ground is, Thou esteemest and honourest Gods Prophet. The reason, therefore take his loving counsell. Of both these in order in handling this second argument, if God will.

The cleering of the ground.

Touching this ground of *Naamans* esteeme of *Elisha*, because I doubt not but many will cavill about it, let me first cleere it, and then come to the point. Some will say then, what wonder, if so strange and miraculous a cure of a desperate disease as *Naamans* was, did attract extraordinary affection, and cause a desire of gratification? But thats nothing to our love to Gods Minister, which if it be found, must arise upon better bottome: But to that I answer two wayes.

First, though *Naaman* of himselfe was carryed as an ordinary man, yet the Lord having the ordering now of his whole course, bred as well good affections to the Prophet, and to God his owne glory and worship, as it bred gladnesse of the cure: So that, even in this love of his (being in the bud) may be discovered a seed of that which after brake out

out when hee was healed. We read of the like example, Joh. 9. of a poore blinde creature, who no ſooner was healed by our Saviour of his blindeneſſe, but his affections of love brake out ſtrangely towards him; ſhall we thinke that becauſe the occaſion hereof was his cure, therefore there was no more in it, ſave a meer carnall humour? No; if we read the 37. and 38. verſes, we ſhall ſee what fire this ſparkle brought forth when our Lord Jeſus had met him, and enlarged him with more grounds, to love him upon better reaſon.

But ſecondly, I ſay, it were well, if even we having deeper and ſtronger bottomes to build our affections upon to Gods Miniſter, were carryed with no leſſe demonſtration then he was, of which, more in the Uſe ſhall be ſpoken. And whereas its objected, that now his ſervants rather tax him for his want of preſent love to the Prophet, then commend him for the former. I anſwer, what wonder if ſo weake a man were ſo eaſily tranſported in his paſſion from his former affection? Firſt, it was God who ſuffered it for his humiliation: And ſecondly, how many who thinke themſelves to ſtand upon ſurer ground in their love to the Miniſter, yet upon farre leſſer occaſion then *Naamans*, even meer tetches and pritches, very toyes and conceits, can alienate their love from the Prophet of God, and that both more deeply then *Naaman* and without repenting thereof; which yet he preſently did. So that the truth is, we have no ſuch cauſe to cavill againſt this point, nor to diſdaine to take *Naaman* to bee our example; rather it were well if wee would prove as good Scholars, as hee is meete to ſet us to Schoole.

Doctrine. The eſteeme of Gods Miniſter ought to be precious.

The point then is, The eſteeme and love of heart wherewith wee embrace the Miniſter of God, ought to be ſingular. If the Prophet (ſay they) had bidden thee do ſome great thing, wouldeſt thou not have done it? Sure, it muſt bee great affection which ſhould ſo eaſily cauſe a man to doe great things? Whether we underſtand their words in relation to his obedience, to any charge which the Prophet ſhould have put upon him for the cure of his diſeaſe, or in relation to his readineſſe, to beteame the Prophet a deep gratification for his labour; both muſt needs argue love and eſteeme. If the Prophet had told thee thou muſt goe barefoote on pilgrimage many miles, or fought ſome battell of great hazard or the like, wouldeſt not thou have adventured thy ſelfe to get thy diſeaſe cured? If the Prophet ſhould have required at thine hands ſome rich recompence, talents of ſilver, coſtly apparrel, the moſt curious preſents that could be, wouldeſt not thou have freely granted them? How much more then, when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh and be cleane? So then *Naamans* love (wee ſee) runnes in a ſtrong ſtreame, a ſmall thing ſhould not part him and the Prophet, he would doe great things for him rather then faile, let but the Prophet command a taske, or aske a reward, and what would not hee doe? Nay freely, unasked, unexpected? So that the point is plaine, That the affection which Gods Miniſter (if the faithfull Miniſter of Chriſt) deſerves at our hands, is and ought to be ſingular and pretious. This point firſt, I will prove by Reaſon, then by Scripture, and ſo come to Uſe.

2Kings

1. *Reason.* Note.

Deut. and Josh.18.6. 1 Cor.9.12. 13.14.

Gal. 4.15.

2. *Reason.*

See Heb.13. 17.

The first Reason is, the charge of God. Its eternall, and cannot be infringed. I enter not now upon the strickt question of Tithes, (my Text reacheth onely to the singularity of loyalnesse and love, and that other argument is at large handled by others) but I say of the Ministers patrimony, as of the Princes, it is eternall and unalienable, without horrible sacrilege. God hath both in the old and new Testament, most cautiously provided that the Minister should never be forsaken. How frequent are those speeches with *Moses*, Forsake not the Levite all thy dayes. The Lord hath not given him a portion among his brethren, but the Lord himselfe is his portion: These Leviticall phrases are of eternall right. Thou shalt not muzle the mouth of the oxe (saith *Paul* out of *Moses*) he that serveth at the altar must live upon it. If we afford you spirituall things, is it much if we reap your temporall? Did those Ministers of God, who were inspited with extraordinary gifts by the holy Ghost without their owne toile and industry speake thus, who because they freely received, might freely give, and shall it not much more bee verified of them that serve at the altar of the Gospel, whose labours cost a greater price of paines and charge to furnish? And because these Texts do trench rather upon the fruits of love, then the affection it self: How were the Galathians affected to *Paul*, Did they thinke their eyes too deare for him, to pull out and give him? Are not the very feet of them beautifull, who bring glad tidings of peace and good things? Did not those Galathians receive *Paul* as an Angel of God? Would not they have imparted to him not onely their goods, but even their very soules? And what wonder? Are they not his joy and crowne? Are they not as his wife? Are not their soules dearer to him, then the bodies of men can be to a Physitian? Doth hee not love them with a love farre above whatsoever a friend, an husband, a father, a guardian can affect the persons of their friends, wives, children or orphans? If the love which they utter bee greater, must not the duty of love be so which they owe them? So then, God will have the people to tender, esteem and honour the Minister: Its a charge which no time, no prescription can alter.

Secondly, as they are thus to embrace him for his very message sake and the honour of his calling: So also in respect of the outward service he performeth, as man to man. Who goeth to warfare upon his owne charge? Who can attend the word and the world too? Should they that serve at the altar and attend to reading, be compelled to forsake their places and play the drudges? Plow and sow, runne to mill with their sacks, and to market with their wallets to get in their owne provision? Shall Gods annointed ones, upon whose head the oile of the consecration of their God hath beene laid, and are separated from men, to the use of God, and the service of his Church, returne to bee common worldlings, trade and trafficke in earthly affaires all the weeke long, and on the Sabbath, with prophane hands, attempt holy things! Is is not meet that they be borne out of all other charges, that they may closely attend to Gods worke, unto which who is sufficient? Yes verily. Shall shepheards, souldiers, watchmen, Embassadours, all need their support for their travell, and shall a Minister be left to his owne charge?

charge? Were it for the Kings honour to ſend his Embaſſadour to Venice, and there to leave him ſo deſtitute of meanes and proviſion, that he ſhould be compelled to turne Merchant, or Factor to maintaine himſelfe? What baſeneſſe were that? Should hee worke with his own hands as *Paul* (who therefore made tents, becauſe he needed, neither ſtudy, nor proviſion?) How diſhonourable were it? Read that choice Text for this, Heb. 15.27.

Thirdly, the Miniſter of God, his maine worke is, the ſaving of the ſoules of thoſe that heare him, to turne people to the living God, from their Idolls, to beget them to God, to convert them, to travell of them a new, till Chriſt be formed in them, to marry them firſt, and after to preſent them as a pure virgin to the Lord Jeſus, to beare them upon his ſhoulders, to heale them of their diſeaſes, to keepe them from the Wolfe, Lion and Beare, to comfort them at the heart, and to declare unto them their righteouſneſſe, with a thouſand ſuch like ſpirituall offices; and can any affection, love, coſt, maintenance, equall that tender regard of a Miniſter, of the eternall ſoules of Gods people? No verily. 3. *Reaſon.* 1 Tim ult. Act. 26.8.

Nay not ſo only; but they are ſacred pledges of the peoples welfare, that ſo long as they abide among them, they carry them as under the ſafe conduct and banner of God: The fire ſhall not burne them, nor waters drowne them, nor wrath of God conſume them. While *Moſes* and *Aaron* were among the Iſraelites with their mediation betweene God and the people, carrying Gods gifts downe to them, and their prayers and ſacrifices up to him, how ſafe were they? While *Noah* that Preacher of righteouſneſſe lived upon earth, what waters could hurt it? Was it drowned till hee was taken into the Arke? They are even the hoſtages of ſafety to their people: Thoſe that ſtand in the gap, and lye in ambuſh for them, howling betweene porch and altar for them, Spare thy people O Lord whom thou haſt bought! What ſhall the heathen ſay (ſaith *Moſes*) if thou bring thy people into the wildernesſe to deſtroy them? Such advocates and impleaders are they at the barre of heaven for their welfare! They are the Dogs of the great Shepherds flocke to ſhelter them from the wild beaſts of Hereſie, Schiſme, Prophaneneſſe, and Atheiſme, and from vengeance provoked thereby: They with their Cenſors ſtand between the dead and the living to ſtay the plague: They are the pillars to hold up and hold forth the truth of God, and to preſerve it incorrupt and unſpotted till the comming of Chriſt: They are the Swords and Axes of God to cut downe and deſtroy the wicked, and enemies of the Church, that mouth of Chriſt, out of which the ſword of two edges proceeds, either to defend or deſtroy: They are as *Abrahams Iobs, Samuels* and *Daniels*, great ſtakes & props to uphold the great building and frame of the Church: as they ſaid to *David*, Thou art worth tenne thouſand of us; So are theſe, if they be ſuch as they ought, perſons pickt out, one of a thouſand. And ſhall not this honour of theirs procure them love and honour at their peoples hands deſervedly? Yes, without queſtion. Not as though all they can returne, can equall the coſt and worth of the Miniſters labours; (for the worke of converſion deſerves the returne of the ſoule in 4. *Reaſon* Joel 2. Numb. 14.15. 16. 2 Sam. 18.3. Philem. 9.

2 Kings

in thanks) but to declare the obedience of their heart to him that commands it; and the thanks which they inwardly beare, and would testifie in a far other kinde if it were in their power.

Psal. 16.2. And lastly, that the due which in deed wee owe to God (save that our goodnesse cannot reach him) may in the descent of it fall upon his Minister, whom he hath made his instrument of doing good, and his Attorney to receive our acknowledgement. The reward is rather an honourable, then an equall recompence. So for Reasons.

Proofes. The Scripture is plentifull of proofs for it. Let him (saith *Paul*) that is
Gal 6.6. taught in the word, communicate to him that teacheth him in all good
1 Cor.7.9. things. And the same Apostle (purposely handling the point) Doth any man plow and sow or plant, and not looke to eat of the fruit thereof? Doth not the Law (meaning the perpetuall equity of it) say, Thou shalt not muzle the mouth of the oxe which treadeth out the corne? And he that serveth at the Altar, must live upon the Altar? Doth God take care for oxen, or saith he it altogether for our sakes? Surely for ours, that he who soweth in hope, should thresh also, and bee partaker of it: If a man should sow wheat in his field, would he not looke at least to reap a crop answerable to rye or barley? If we sow spirituall things, is it wonder if we receive carnall? So also againe, he implieth in Rom. 19 15. That they deserve speciall entertainment in a speciall kinde, as one who brings news of an inheritance out of a far Country! Beautifull are the feet of them that bring glad tidings (though dirty and dusty) yet deserve washing and annointing. How much more they who bring the Gospel to the people of God, and say to Zion, Thy God raigneth! And
Matth.10. our Saviour addeth, The labourer is worthy his hire, not welcome only, but maintenance also. He that receiveth you, receiveth me, and he who receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a Prophet,
Verse ult. in the name of a Prophet, receives a Prophets reward. In the old Testament, when the Priests and Levites neglected their service, the Lord was fain to stir up extraordinary Prophets, but who maintained them? Was it not a custome that all who went unto them for advice, offered them a gratification? Were they left (think we) for the Ravens to feed ordina-
1 Sam.9.8. rily? (In a famine it was necessary I grant:) No, witnesse that of *Saul* to his servant, when he meant to go to *Samuel*, & heard him say, what shall we bring to the man of God, for the mony is spent? I (saith he) have the fourth part of a shekel of silver, that I will give him. The like is, that
2 King.4.42. of the man of Baalshalisha, who is said to bring to the man of God bread of the first fruits, even twenty loaves of barley and eares in the
Heb. 13. huske. Shall the Gospel be inferiour to the Law in this point? So for assistance and encouragement, Obey them that are set over you, and submit to them, grieve them not, nor let them doe your worke with
1 Tim.5.17. care and dismayment, for that were smally for your benefit. Let those Elders (saith *Paul*) who rule well be counted worthy of double honour, (both of maintenance and countenance) especially those that labour in the Word and Doctrine. These are sufficient, others perhaps may offer themselves in the processe of the point.

Quest. But wherein may some say, stands this love of the people to the Minister?

Ian-

I anſwer, in many offices; I will mention two or three of the chiefe. First, in the juſtifying, honouring and eſteeming of the Miniſter. For if that be once prejudiced in their hearts, farewell all hope of ſucceſſe upon his labours. *Ob.* But the Miniſter himſelfe muſt looke to that. *Anſw.* I grant it in part, *viz.* That no man is bound to magnifie him, who diſhonours himſelfe by his ſloth, ſcandalous life, tongue and manners; and yet even of ſuch I muſt ſay, that to delight to deprave ſuch, or ſcorne them, (whom rather we ſhould mourne to behold) is ſinfull. And as for the infirmities of the wel-deſerving, we ſhould cover them, and carry a mantle backward that we may not ſee their nakedneſſe. But I ſay, there is oftentimes great deſert of honour in the Miniſter, which yet he cannot come by: Therefore its the duty of the people perpetually to ſeeke the credit, and promote the eſteeme of ſuch: For under Chriſt, the Miniſter is that wiſdome, which all the children thereof muſt juſtifie, Matth. 11.19. If he count them his honour and crowne, what ſhould they count him, ſave their mutuall honour and beſt garland? How ſhould they beare up his name, as the Lions of *Salomon* upheld his throne, vindicating his perſon againſt all ſcorners, cavillers, upbraiders? Not to be aſhamed of him before any, whether equalls, betters or inferiours; yea the whole congregation ſhould backe him, and ſtrengthen his hands againſt all oppoſites, that hee may (without ſuſpition or feare) goe on in his courſe, as wee read of the people to Joſhua Cap. 1.

Anſw.
3. Things.
1. Honour.

1 Theſ. ult.

Secondly, it ſtands in the peoples ſealing of his Miniſtry and labours in their owne ſoules and converſation. That they may be an Epiſtle written in their hearts for the commendation of him, without any other letters teſtimoniall; and that the impreſſion of his paines may bee ſeen upon them, which is the realleſt honour of a Miniſter in the world; unto which is conſequent the honour of their adherence and communion with him as the chiefe member thereof, that he may be made privy to their profitings or decayings in underſtanding and grace, that hee may mourne with them in their ſorrowes, and rejoice in their comforts, as a tender father, guardian and nurſe, that he may reſolve their doubts, eaſe their grieſes, and be all in all to them; that no man may better know them then himſelfe, and they him and his voice as their Shepherd, without eſtrangement or ſhineſſe.

2. Sealing to their Miniſtry. 2. Cor.

Adherence.

The third is their ſerviceablenes to him: That they count themſelves to ſtand charged with him, as our Saviour charged *Iohn* with his mother: To be provident for his ſupply and ſupport, by all meet preventing of affronts and offences, at home, abroad, by procuring aſſiſtance, favour and protection, by their beſt endeavours, travell, friends, counſell and mediation, as acknowledging him to be theirs. As once a Phyſitian bad his Miniſter looke to his ſoule, and he ſhould not want one that would looke to his body: The like ſhould each man, Lawyer, Juſtice, Gentleman or meaner do within the compaſſe of their places. Each one ſhould have one ſhred of him or other.

3. Serviceableneſſe. Joh. 19.25.

Laſtly, allowance of a faire and comfortable competency of meanes, to prevent carking or ſhifting courſes, or whatſoever might diſable or diſmay him in his Miniſtery, or divert him from attendance to reading; that

4. Maintenance.

2 Kings

that ſo he may the more freely devote himſelfe to his worke: And this muſt not onely laſt while he is in the yoke and occupied, but alſo if hee ſhall by any infirmity, diſeaſe, age, decay, become leſſe fit for his ſervice then formerly, (eſpecially if wrong and oppoſition of enemies cauſe it) that yet they take it in good part, not adding ſorrow to ſorrow, but ſticking to him in his diſtreſſe. So much for the Anſwer of this Queſtion.

Vſes.

Miniſters muſt not be diſtruſtfull of providence.

I proceed to the Uſes of it. And here firſt, let this point be ſolemne Admonition, Information and Inſtruction to the Miniſter of God. Admonition firſt to beware leſt through diſtruſt and infidelity, he ſuffer his ſpirit to conſult with fleſh and bloud for the matter of his encouragement and ſupport in his Miniſtry. Hath the Lord had ſuch reſpect unto him as to charge his people ſolemnly with the ſuſtenance and maintenance of ſuch his faithfull Miniſters as ſerve at his Altar? Hath he engaged himſelfe by promiſe to them, to be their exceeding great reward, and not to ſuffer them to want? Hath hee betruſted his Church with their welfare, that as they would looke for mercy and bleſſing from him, ſo they honour and uphold the perſon, ſtate, life and liberties of his ſervants the Miniſters? Oh! take this kindly at Gods hand, truſt him to make good his promiſe; he who hath the hearts and affections, the eſtates and purſes of all at his controll and command, he is able to encourage us and ſuſtaine us in our painfull, conſcionable diſcharge of the taske impoſed upon us, to feed his lambs and his ſheep, to wa ch over them, to goe before them in an holy example. Let us not ſhrinke from this worke, nor ſhrug at the difficulty of it through feare, oppoſition of men, malice of enemies, bad examples of thoſe who favour their owne eaſe, belly, pleaſures: But leave we ſuch to themſelves, and truſt we God, who hath taken ſuch ſtrickt order for our proviſion and contentment, ſo long as we be faithfull. As *Peter* ſpeakes, Feed we the flocke of Chriſt, not for filthy lucre ſake or from a greedineſſe of gaine, but from a ready minde, well appaid and ſatisfied with our ſervice, as ſerving a good Maſter who will ſee us abundantly requited? The Lord told the tribe of *Levi* that they ſhould have no inheritance among their brethren in the diviſion of Canaan: For why? He himſelfe would be their portion: He had taken good and ſure order for them and theirs, that they ſhould have no cauſe to complaine. And ſo he did. For ſo long as they walked in their places faithfully, they were richly provided for. Should the Levites then murmure againſt God for this unequall diſtribution? Should they cavill againſt him and ſay, that he had cut them off from their hopes and means, and preferred their brethren before them, ſo that they muſt wait upon their trenchers, and feed upon their ſcraps? No, no; Rather he had exalted them above their brethren, and alotted them a portion out of their eſtates by a command; ſo that now their life was a life of faith, their duty was to feed his people in *Iaacob*, and his inheritance in Iſrael: Their lips were to preſerve knowledge, ſo that the people might from their mouthes underſtand the lore and law of God: If they attended theſe things well, they were to caſt themſelves upon God for the reſt, who was their God allſufficient in a more eminent meaſure then any of the other Tribes.

Pet.5.2.

Joſh.13.33.

Even

Even ſo let the ſame care of God for us, encourage us to our worke. Let us not forſake this plow of the Miniſtry, looking backe after the world and our owne ends: Let us not diſtruſt him for ſiniſter and outward reſpects: The world is unthankefull, and the hearts of men very falſe and hollow: this might cauſe us to forſake conſcience and ſeeke our owne ends, leave our ſtudies, conceale needfull diſcountenanced truths, pick quarrells with our calling, and alledge that we Miniſters of all others, are meanlieſt appointed, expoſed to the wrong and baſe uſage of men, that know not their worth, nor how to priſe their paines: Therefore they muſt be faine to be leſſe attendant to reading, ſtudy, overſight, viſitation of the people, and regarding of their ſoules; They muſt be compelled to turne Purchaſers, Uſurers, Merchants, Huſbandmen, and to buſie themſelves deeply in the world: They have a charge to looke too, wife and children to maintaine, and they know if they bee gone, no body will looke after their poſterity, therefore if they turne their ſtudies and Miniſteries into carkings and toylings for the world, let none blame them! Well, there is, no doubt, ſome cauſe to accuſe the unthankefulneſſe of people: But of all others you may worſt complaine; for you rather harden their hearts by your own covetouſneſſe and baſe diſhonouring of your Miniſtry, by your ſloth and idleneſſe, then procure to your ſelves, or deſerve reſpect and eſteem from them; they only may plead that who cleave to their Miniſtry, and be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, not diſtruſtfull; ſlothfull Cretians and worldlings; and therefore be admoniſhed: Take not an occaſion by the ſinnes of the people to diſtruſt God, but rather by the promiſe of God abhorre your eaſe and diſtruſt, and fall to Gods work with cheerfulneſſe and good conſcience. Tit. 1.6.

Againe, ſeeing God hath taken the care for us Miniſters, whiles we are at worke, let us not ſnare our ſelves with an ill conſcience in the doing of our worke. God is not tyed to our ſinne for the meanes of ſupporting us. Many make it a ſtrong argument for the ſwallowing of any gobbets, and to defend themſelves in their flattering of their betters in their ſinne, ſmoothing and blanching them in their baſe courſes, becauſe elſe, ſay they, wee ſhall not have their good will, encouragement and aſſiſtance: Great mens frownes are now a dayes all in all to ſcare men from faithfulneſſe in their Miniſtry! And if any perill or danger be caſt in mens way for keeping of conſcience, preſently this objection offers it ſelfe, but what ſhall wee doe? would you have us beg, endanger our eſtates and freeholds, our liberties and welfares? Alas poore ſoules! Is this the thanke which you returne to God for his alſufficient providing for you? Should you diſtruſt him after all the care which hee hath taken? Should you now (as *Peter* ſpeaks) cry a confederacy with the wicked, cleave to baſe diſhonourable courſes, to attaine your owne ends, as if there were no God to provide? It were baſe enough to do thus if the Lord hath left you at ſix and ſevens, to ſhift for your ſelves, but having ſo faithfully promiſed to ſee to you while you are faithfull; why ſhould ſo vile a thought enter into you, as to imagine, that except you lick up the ſcurfe of the time and play the temporizers and hypocrites againſt conſcience; you muſt needs want

2. Branch. Admonition. Snare not our conſciences in doing our worke.

1 Pet. 3.

2 Kings

want ſupplies, and be deſtitute of maintenance? No, no: Truſt God, walke in your uprightneſſe, feare not the feares of the malicious, but ſanctifie the Lord God in your heart, who hath promiſed to bee with you to the end of the world: Let him be your fear: Let his promiſe be your ſtrong hold, forſake him not, and he will not faile you; he hath a treaſure hid in the bowels of the earth for thoſe that cleave to him, and warpe not from him by an ill conſcience; hee hath not ſet men on worke to honour and ſupport them, to the end that he himſelfe ſhould let them ſinke or ſwim, if others ſhould happly neglect them; but in ſuch a caſe, he will ſtep in himſelfe, and be their God alſufficient rather then faile, ſo that they ſhall ſay by experience, There is nothing loſt by truſting God: At the hardeſt, they have Gods bond to put in ſure, and he hath ſaid, He will not faile them: Fear not therefore what man can do: But in well doing commit your ſelf unto him who is a faithfull keeper; loſe not conſcience, for what ſhall a man give for the recompence of it? Can all that a man gaines by ſuch a bargaine, requite his loſſe? No ſurely: Therefore quiet our ſelves, though there were no calfe in the ſtall or bullocke in the flock, yet the Lord will be your ſtrong ſalvation. I have ſeen the poſterity of the idle, ſcandalous, covetous, of Epicures and lovers of their owne bellies, eaſe and luſts, ſuch as with *Hophni* and *Phinees*, have ſtollen from Gods ſacrifices, to ſerve their owne turnes, to beg their bread, yea in that very place, 1 Sam.3. its threatned: But never ſaw I the righteous forſaken: I have heard of a faithfull Miniſter who refuſed to change his living for conſcience ſake (though it were poore) and that which was offered him was rich: There came to his houſe a good gentleman who ſeeing him fare hardly with great content of minde, inſtantly gave him ſome peeces to encourage him in his courſe: Or, the Lord hath given ſuch a bleſſing upon a little, that it ſhall goe a great way; or, if he have given a man meanes of his owne, he ſhall willingly live upon them and ſpend them, that God may have his work done the whiles; and if men faile, yet God ſhall cauſe the Ravens to feed us, rather then we ſhall periſh: Children ſhall have portions, education and meanes, from unknowne friends, and nothing ſhall be wanting to them, that are not wanting to God.

Matth. 28, ult.

Heb. 13.5.

1 Pet. 4. ult. Matth. 16. 26. Habac. 3.

3. Branch. Admonition. Debauch not nor diſhonour your ſelves.

Moreover it ſhall warne Gods Miniſters to beware, leſt they deprive themſelves of this promiſe, by diſhonouring and debauching their own perſons, names and eſtates, by their miſdemeanours. They may long enough cry out of the deſpiſedneſſe of the Clergy; if themſelves pull downe the houſe of honour and due reſpect, with their owne hands. Such have too much honour in that they hold their places. Quit your ſelves therefore (my brethren) of all ſuch indecency and vulgarneſſe of carriage towards your people, as might diſparage you: Be no common Proctors and Barretors among them, ſeeke not theirs but them, chiefly love them for the good which is planted in them, teach them not the faſhions of the world, to be quarrellers, contentious, covetous, ſide not with ſome againſt others, maintaine no factions and partialities, bee no common companions with them in their bargaines and worldly trafficke, hang not about their ſhop windows, be no janglers and pratlers with them in common matters, haunt not the Alehouſe, pot and pipe, with

with them: In a word, be no joviall, boone fellow with them in their meetings, feaſts, games, and paſtimes: Eaſily is ſuch a one deſpiſed, who diſcovers himſelfe in ſuch kindes, and the like I may ſay in eager purſute of the uttermoſt of our dues, grating upon them, and threatning them, alway at Law, and never ſatisfied; rather buy peace and intereſt it in their ſoules to doe them good, though by denying our ſelves, aime not at great things, eſteeme of the poore with their two mites; be not proud, ambitious and diſdainefull, ſeeke not the account of the greateſt onely: Honour ſtands not in the ſelf-eſteeme of the honourer of himſelfe, but in the eſteeme and account of others that honour us; who commonly thinke the meanlier of us, when we thinke highlieſt of our ſelves: Honour being a ſhadow which flyes from the purſuer, and purſues him that flyes from it: Be not therefore lovers of honour, inquiſitive after the reputations of men, its a means to make us ſcorned; reſt content with the portion aſſigned us by God; reach not after great matters, leſt God abaſe us to a meane condition: Hold an holy mediocrity between covetouſneſſe and improvidence or expenſiveneſſe; betweene pride and contempt of our reputation; betweene ſupercilious or diſdainfull carriage, and a common prophaneing of our perſons with the baſeſt; maintaine the meane in holy contentment, ſoberneſſe and gravity, which may uphold both our names in that credit, and our eſtates in that ſufficiency, which is meet to encourage and ſupport us in our Miniſtry, with hope of profit and bleſſing.

A ſad time when the Miniſters are not ſo countenanced as they ought.

And to conclude this firſt Uſe: This proviſion which God hath made for the Miniſter of the Goſpel, ſhould be encouragement unto him, that ſetting apart all other matters, hee apply himſelfe to that one thing neceſſary for a Miniſter to looke to, that is to feed and watch over the flocke of God betruſted him. Alas! what ſhould it need that we buſie our ſelves about the needleſſe, and neglect the eſſentiall thing of our Calling! What is this, ſave to taxe the Lord of improvidence and careleſſeneſſe of us? As if he would put us to all the worke, and leave us to ſinke in our owne charge! As if hee had no reſpect to our travell and labour of love, but put us to our ſhifts! Shall he cloath the graſſe of the field and the Lillies, which neither labour nor ſpinne? Shall his eye reach to the falling of a ſparrow (ſcarce worth a mite) and ſhall we his Miniſters fill our ſoules with diſtruſt of his providence, and aske who ſhall feed us, or cloath us, or ſave out of the hands of our potent enemies? Are we not better then many ſparrowes? Shall wee then, or can we fall without the notice of our Almighty Father? Doth he not hold us in his right hand, and walke in the midſt of us? What ſhould we then doe, but take more thought how we might walke in our courſe of life and Miniſtery, inoffenſively, cheerfully and confidently? As for other matters, caſting our care upon him who careth for us; for whoſe honour it is, that we be regarded, encouraged, backed, aſſiſted and ſupported, to the uttermoſt of that which is meet for us; and in deſerting of us (in this our worke) he, his name, his glory, his promiſe muſt needs ſuffer, farre more then we, poore wormes, can doe. It is our diſtruſt, not Gods unfaithfulneſſe which leaves us to our ſhifts: And what wonder then, if we take his office out of his hands, to

4. Branch. Be encouraged to feed Gods flock.

2 Kings

carke and plod, and be ſicke of our owne diſcontents? What wonder then, if the great worke of our attendance upon reading, watching, admoniſhing, and being inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, lye by as an arme or bone out of joint, unfit for uſe? But certainly could we honour God in beleeving him to be that he is an alſufficient God, and one to whom the Tribe of *Levi* is pretious, and his peculiar portion, wee ſhould goe to worke as men ſet at liberty, as they who are diſcharged from thought and care, and therefore having but one thing to doe, let us doe it to purpoſe, leaving the reſt to him, who will ſecure us from feare, wrong, danger, enemies; and if he ſave us not quite from ſuch, yet will ſupport us in them, and more then that, redeeme us in due time, from all our ſorrowes, and wipe all teares away from our eyes! Oh! live we by faith in this promiſe, ſtand ſtill and behold we this ſalvation of our God: And as the Lord ſaid to *Ioſhua*, ſo he ſaith to us, Feare not, I will neither faile nor forſake thee. Only bee ſtrong and of good courage. So much for this firſt Uſe.

Vſe 2. Of Terror. Scorners and reproachers of Gods Miniſters, reproved.

Secondly, this is Terror and Reproofe to the people. Terror firſt to all ſcorners and blaſphemers of the perſon and function of the Miniſter. It was once thought to be an odious and black marke of a Jew, to ſpeak againſt the Prieſt, as the Prophets words intimate: But we have ſuch as both ſpeake and doe againſt the perſon and calling of the Miniſter, with all the poiſon and diſdaine they can, profeſſing themſelves to hate the very tribe of them with a deadly & irreconciliable feud. That Centurian in Luke 5.7. is praiſed for loving the Nation of the Jewes: But theſe abhorre both the perſons and the whole Nation of the Miniſters, taking occaſion by all poſſible meanes to expreſſe it in whatſoever companies they come, yea in the moſt reproachfull manner, what opinions and affections they beare toward them.

2 King.9.11. Such were thoſe fellow Captaines of *Iehu*, who when the Prophets meſſenger came to doe his meſſage, asked him, what mad fellow was this who came in unto thee? Even ſuch baſe triviall names doth the world give to the Miniſters of God: And as the villany of old Popiſh Idolls deſerved the baſe tearmes of pild Prieſt, hedge Prieſt, knave Prieſt, and the like: So now ungodly wretches dare abuſe Gods Miniſters as faſt for their goodneſſe, calling them ſingular fellowes, proud, peſtilent Preachers, fantaſticall fellowes, factious, enemies to the eſtate: Oh! of all other men they thinke ſuch may be ſpared, they were well ere ſuch came, and till they be rid of them they ſhall never be quiet: As *Ieremy* ſaith, Woe is me that my mother bred me a man of contention! Jerem.15.10. And againe, I and my children are as ſignes of contradiction; publick ſpectacles to men and Angels, yea the very off-ſcouring of men! It cannot be imagined how Alehouſe hunters, libertines, epicures, ſwearers, worldlings, dare ſpeake and thinke of Gods Miniſters: Oh! the bitterneſſe of their ſpirits, the venome of their tongues; who can ſtand before envy? Proverb. Well, let not all this daunt us! Let us do as our Lord Jeſus himſelf and his Apoſtles, (who eſcaped not the like handling) even carry our ſelves as wiſely as we can, and heap hot coales upon their heads by our long ſuffering and meekneſſe: But as for them, look for no other while they continue as they are, they doe but their kinde.

They

They who deſpiſe Chriſt himſelfe are high traitors and they cannot be guilty of leſſe then of petty treaſon who diſpiſe his Miniſters; and if the maligners or revilers of the fathers of their bodies were to be ſtoned without any more adoe: What ſhall the ſcorners and revilers of the fathers of ſouls be done too? Surely although they may eſcape the judgement of man, they ſhall never avoid his, who hath threatned them that doe but touch, how much more lay ſo violent and execrable hands upon his Miniſters? From what other ſpirit can it come (let the pretences be what they will) but a ſpirit of deſperate prophaneneſſe and debauchednes, yea a Giant-like defiance with God, which becauſe it cannot reach God himſelf, therefore lets fly all their reproaches and ſcorns upon ſuch as doe moſt neerly reſemble and beare witneſſe of him upon earth: The reproaches of them that reproached thee (ſaith the Prophet) have lighted upon me: If the Miniſter can approve it againſt thee that he beares no other blowes or markes, then ſuch as ſhould have lighted upon God himſelfe: Woe to them that are guilty of ſuch blaſphemy! for the Lord ſhall plague them with the ſame eternall plagues, wherewith he plagues thoſe who immediately have blaſphemed Majeſty it ſelfe. But I dwell not upon theſe. I haſten to Reproofe.

Pſal. 105. 15.

Pſal. 69. 9.

And firſt this ſharpely cenſures all ſuch as diſeſteem, diſcourage and deſert ſuch Miniſters as they are bound doubly to honour and reſpect. This very fact of *Naaman* ſhall riſe up in judgement againſt them in the day of Chriſt: Did *Naaman* ſo deerly love the Prophet, one whom he never ſaw before? Before whoſe gate only he had ſtood and heard a meſſage from, but as yet had not ſeene? At the bare report of him? For a bodily cure? Nay the hope of it a far off? Shall an heathen do all this? Shall he even doe ſome, yea any great thing for him? What colour ſhall they pretend then that are farre from doing the leaſt thing for ſuch a Miniſter of God, as not onely they have ſeene, but alſo heard, lived and converſed with, not the firſt day, but ten, twenty, thirty, forty yeares? Not as Prophets but Preachers, (the leaſt whereof is not onely greater then *Eliſha*, but *Iohn Baptiſt* himſelfe, Matth. 11. 12.) not promiſing the cure of leproſie, but of the ſoule, not offering the effect of Jordens waters, but the waters of regeneration in baptiſme! Not by a meſſenger, but by their owne hand, and by the power of the word, farre more excellent then the urim of a Prieſt, or the viſion of a Prophet? Surely one might well thinke, that ſuch people ſhould refuſe no paines, coſt or hazard for ſuch Miniſters! But be willing (if need were) to thruſt themſelves between the ſwords point and their boſomes, to ride and runne to doe them good, to ſtake their purſe, counſell, travell, ſelves, ſoules and all for their encouragement: If for the Brethren, much more for the Fathers, ſhould we lay downe our lives. But is it ſo? Surely let that prejudice which men generally have of the very handling, yea naming of ſuch a point as this is, ſay for them what their affections are in this caſe! yea and the thoughts even of Miniſters themſelves, who ſtudy how to paſſe over this point, as the Dog of *Nilus* paſſeth by the ſtreame, rather catching here and there a lap, then daring to ſtay and drinke for feare of ſome Crocodile or other to ſnap him up! I hope (brethren) you will pardon me, if I deale plainly, as having

Vſe 3. Of Reproſe. Deſerters and diſcouragers of ſuch Miniſters as they are bound too, to be blamed.

1 Joh. 3. 16.

2 Kings

no claime either to your tithes or purſes, who (I am ſure have ſpent five times more charge in furniſhing my ſelfe for the worke of the Miniſtery, then ever my Miniſtery was worth unto me) therefore the rather I beſeech you give me favour: I come not to accuſe you of this congregation, for your preſent love or countenance: Onely I muſt tell you, many who now in our welfare, uſe of gifts, liberty and elbowroome, ſhew themſelves forwardeſt to encourage us; if God turne the wheele, and change our publickneſſe into privacy, and our liberty to reſtraint, and our peace into enmity, and our health into ſickneſſe, and leave us to their curteſies, will be the firſt that will lowre upon us, and challenge us rather for our curioſity and preciſeneſſe, then regard us either for the former ſervices we have done, or for the ſorrowes we ſuffer. Experience hath proved it ſo throughly already in many worthy lights, who have ſpent all their oile for the uſe of the Sanctuary; that even thoſe hearers of theirs, who moſt of all ſeemed to rejoice in their light, have no ſooner ſaw their light to be a little darkened to the worldward, but they have ſlipt away in a miſt, and beheld them as ſtrangers afar off, deſerted them, their wives and children, ſo that, (except God had ſent them meat and ſupport from unknowne places) they might have either famiſhed, or beene urged to dig or beg for their livings. And what meaſure is to be expected here from you, God knoweth; but it is no other like, but the moſt will fulfill the ſins of their forefathers in this kinde, and verifie the Proverb, No penny, no *Pater noſter*.

Note this fulfilled Propheſie.

Luke 16.3.

But I muſt confine my Reproof to ſome order. For I ſee that which is ſpoken in generall and to all, is ſpoken to none. Firſt then, here are reproved all partiall lovers and eſteemers of the Miniſter, ſuch as love not directly out of the judgement of a Miniſters calling and labours, but out of humor and conceit. Such a Miniſter, they ſay, they love and can well affect, but as for others, their edge is not ſo much toward them: Why? Are they not as faithfull, zealous Miniſters of God as the other? Yes verily: Why then do you carry ſo partiall an affection between them, occaſioning both emulation between the Miniſters themſelves; and provoking others by your examples (for ſuch one doth a great deal of hurt in a congregation) to partiality and baſeneſſe this way? But know O man! whoſoever thou art, that what ever content thy giddy humour may give it ſelfe in ſuch a courſe, thy conſcience (if thou have any left) will one day take on with thee! Poore wretch, that which is done according to God is done equally! Unequall affections are from ſelfe and ſelf-ends, and therefore muſt looke for no reward from God, they have all the reward they ſhall have already: Looke to thy ſelfe therefore betime and repent; get thine hide-bound ſpirit enlarged in thee, & be not ſtraitned in thy bowells to ſuch as are large toward thee.

Speciall Reproofe.
1. Againſt partiall lovers of the Miniſter.

Secondly, it reproves all paſſionate lovers of the Miniſter, onely ſo long as the pang holds; in a gare and heat, they will runne, ride and take any paines for the getting and countenancing of a Preacher: But why? Hoping to tye him to their owne girdle: So long as this hope laſteth, they will be formoſt in procuring him dwelling, meanes and account, and who but he? But let him once come neer, and touch their diſeaſe to the quick, and ſhew himſelfe a true friend indeed to

2. Paſſionate lovers.

ſearch

ſearch and heale their ſores: Oh then! They turne as deepe enemies; then all love is forgotten, then they muſt fall as low as the earth, who before were lifted up to heaven: Alas! whom ſought yee when yee ſought Miniſters? Such as might ſooth and flatter you? Reeds ſhaken with the winde? Are they therefore become your enemies, becauſe they tell you the truth? Surely then are you ſicke of ſome ſuch malady as muſt be ſtrongly purged: If God love you he will heale you with better Phyſicke then you ſeek. Matth. 11.8.

A third ſort there are, who love indirectly and for by & baſe ends, not for the end of the Miniſters labours, but if they can pleaſe themſelves in his wit, memory, elocution; if they like the phraſe, quaintneſſe and carriage of his matter to tickle their eare, or if his company bee merry and joviall, apt to correſpond with their humours, if he bee uſefull to them in any other kinde, then they can love him: But if theſe accidentalls be wanting, the oile failing, their love wanzes alſo. 3. Lovers indirectly.

Others there are, who will ſhew themſelves forward for the Miniſter, that their zeale may be noted, and it may appeare, that they are eſpeciall men above others, and ſo they ſeeke the opinion of men in that behalfe. But if they ſee others as forward, or more forward then they, ſo that they are not like to have the repute and name of it, then they are cold, yea dead in the neſt; ſhewing that they ſought themſelves more then God in their love; and therefore although they ſhould have all their will, and win the ſpurs without any contradiction, yet their love would not prove effectuall to their owne good, except God do change both it and them in a ſpeciall manner. 4. Lovers for vain-glory.

Fifthly, all formall, verball and fulſome lovers of the Miniſter; who will not deny him good tearmes, good ſalutations, complements (yea praiſes behinde his backe) but there they reſt and goe no further: If they be urged to any reall reſpect and acknowledgement, they vaniſh preſently; for you muſt know words coſt them nothing, therefore they can afford them good cheap, but more they will not beteame. Countenance, aſſiſtance, maintenance and the like, are burthenſome to them: Rather they pull away from them that which is their due, defraud them of that right which is not in their power, lawfully to deny; & that at with all the ſecret ſubtilty, cunning and devices which poſſibly they can, and thinke that the beſt gotten goods which is fleeced from him. All bread of deceit is ſweet; but eſpecially the bread of ſacriledge; but as all ſtollen bread ſhall become the bane of the theefe, ſo above all other ſhall this. Oh ſay they! its good reaſon that the Miniſter ſhould be regarded, and we hope he lives well; and where he is worth a ſcore of pounds, would he were worth hundreds, God ſtir him up many friends, we ſhould be glad to ſee him proſper, and many ſuch good morrowes; but as that empty barren companion in Saint *Iames*, who bids the poore be warme, and fed, and cloathed, (as if he were all made of mercy) yet neither cloathes, feeds nor warmes his backe, belly or fleſh; ſo fares it with theſe lovers. Oh the world is full of ſuch empty and hypocriticall diſſemblers! 5. Formall and verball lovers.

Sixtly, ſuch as care not what coſt they beſtow upon their luſts, their ſports and paſtimes, pricking up their children in vaine faſhions, maintaining 6. Lovers of their paſtimes and ſports better.

2 Kings

taining a ſort of looſe and rude ſervants that ſpend their time in guzling and drinking: Their Hounds and Hawkes they care not what they give for: In a word, for their own eaſe and ends, to game and ſpend upon their riotous appetites, they care not what courſe they take, give up their houſe-keeping, and cut off all charges which can bee, and more then they ought, till they make themſelves odious: But preſſe them to doe any thing for a poore Miniſter, who preaches painfully upon ſmall allowance: Oh how hardly it comes off from them! Its death, and as the cutting off a joint, to be drawne to ſuch a ſervice.

7. Scant lovers.

Again, others perhaps, will afford him ſome poor and dry pittance, but there is all: Its as water taken out of a pit, not out of a fountaine, when they have done their devotion, all is finiſhed: They add not aſſiſtance, countenance, maintenance and honour, as thinking all too little; but ſtint themſelves within very narrow bounds & will ſtir no further. Endleſſe it were to ſpeake of all: Theſe may ſerve for a taſte, by the paw you may judge of the Lion. Oh! that this Reproofe might ſo pierce them, that they might fall upon themſelves, and reprove themſelves bitterly for their more then heatheniſh, unnaturall, unthankefulneſſe.

Let no liberall people in the City or Country be offended.

Papiſts may condemne us for our diſregard of our Miniſters.

This blinde generation of Papiſts ſhall riſe up in judgement and condemne us Proteſtants, yea many of us noted for our zeale: For what coſt doe they refuſe to be at, to maintaine their Prieſts and Jeſuits in their bravery, nay what fines would they not be willing to pay for the liberty of their Religion? But alas! We who profeſſe a better, and ſeeme zealous for it, have no ſuch principle of love in us: Our Religion muſt ſtand alone, and defend her ſelfe, or elſe ſhe may ſinke or ſwim for us: Its the mercy of God to our Kingdome, to keepe the hearts of our Queen and Kings of bleſſed memory and nobleneſſe of heart, in the defence of the truth of God, without toleration and imbezeling, and long may the Lord ſo rule and diſpoſe of their ſpirits! For its to be feared, if they & we were but brought to the triall, who would give moſt for their Religion, they for their Prieſts, or we for our Miniſters, they would outbid and outdrop us, (many of us, even wealthy Gentlemen and others, I will not tax all) as much as Crownes or Royalls outbid braſſe farthings. The Lord ſhew us our diſeaſe, and to what iſſue it would come, if God prevented it not.

Vſe 3. People exhorted to honour and ſupport the Miniſter.

Thirdly, this point is Exhortation to all, who are convinced of this Truth: That they practiſe this duty of love to the Miniſter of God. If you would truly be free from all theſe aſperſions, (as what good heart would not ſhake her lap of ſuch dung?) Do not only abhor the treachery, inconſtancy, baſeneſſe and unthankfulneſſe of hollow lovers: Doe not onely abhorre the love of your ſelves, luſts and appetites more then God or his Miniſter; But eſpecially learne this myſtery of loving a Prophet for himſelfe, and in the name of a Prophet, for his meſſage ſake: Get an heart knit to him in a cloſe band of amity which no ſword can cut in two, no time, occaſion or danger interrupt: Let it not bee a love of teeth outward, or outward ſignification, but a child-like, loyall, reverend and ſacred love without diſſimulation. Let the very joy of his meſſage goe as deepe into thy ſoule, as theſe bad properties goe into the ſpirit of the contrary. Lin not till the Miniſter of God have as well

How that may be effected.

kindled

kindled a fire in thy heart of ſound love and affection, as ſet up a flaſhing light in thy mind of knowledge and underſtanding, which may vaniſh, though for a time thou ſeeme to rejoice in it: Brethren, if we deſire your love, pardon us this wrong, for you ſhall fare the better. If once this Epiſtle be written or engraven in thy heart with the pen of a Diamond, the characters thereof will be indeleble. Its no letter of inke and paper, but written by an Adamant claw of the Spirit, which knits you faſter, then *Ionathan* was knit to *David*: This will make you cloſe and faithfull, and you will goe under a woods ſide, into a wildernesſe to renue your covenant. No meſſage can ſo pierce into your ſpirit as this. If your Lawyer ſhould by his skill and pleading, win the day at Law for you, if the Phyſitian ſhould recover you of a deadly diſeaſe, if your ſpokeſman ſhould prevaile in a great marriage of many thouſands: None would ſticke ſo deepe, nor deſerve ſuch love as the meſſage of reconciliation, and the cure of ſpirituall leproſie, cauſing the fleſh of thy ſoule to returne againe as the fleſh of a little child. This will make thee doe great things for the Prophet, this will ingratiate and make him as one of a thouſand unto thee. Shall any thing now part him and me? Thinke we that the Eunuch (as ſpeedily as *Philip* was ſnatcht from him) carried him not away with him in his heart? Should mony, travell, feare or danger, ever have ſeparated them? Oh brthren! let this example here of *Naaman*, ſoke as oile into our ſpirits! And before you depart hence, beg it of God, that he would teach you the obligation of a ſoule to his Miniſter: And then we will give up our ſelves (as *Paul* ſpeakes) firſt to the Lord, and then to him in a league of faithfull amity: Make but this ſure that we have received his meſſage, and then there needs no more. That will be a principle within to dictate and direct the reſt; be the fruits greater or ſmaller, ſo that love be the guide, all ſhall be well. The odds which *Paul* to *Philemon* ſpeakes of, Thou oweſt me thine owne ſoule: And that which our Saviour ſpeakes of, To give a cup of cold water, we know, is very large and different; yet where love is the roote, both are accepted with God, and all the ſteps which paſſe betweene: Love may be truſted for the meaſure, for ſhee hath an inſtinct which teacheth her what to doe; ſhee can purge the heart of ſcantneſſe and ſtraitneſſe, and enlarge it with openneſſe and freedome. If Popiſh and ungrounded love be ſo full and free, ſhall love truly rooted be barren? Shall error bee more powerfull then truth? No, no: The favour of love that comes from a ſoule redeemed with the pretious bloud of Chriſt, excells all other reſpects whatſoever, and carryes more demonſtration with it. And if love beare the ſway, a true Miniſter of Chriſt will be as free to impart himſelfe to the pooreſt and meaneſt of his congregation, who can make him little requitall, as to the richeſt and beſt; yea although he be at ſome coſt with them alſo, as in ſome caſes of diſtreſſe, and viſiting of the ſicke it may be expected from him: The loadſtone which drawes his heart in pitty and compaſſion, being the grace and neceſſity of the parties, rather then his own advantage.

Act. 8.

Rom. 18.

But to returne to the people, in a word, give your hearts openly and freely (next to God) to his Miniſter for his worke ſake. Lately I read a ſtory

The duty urged.

2Kings

ſtory of the afflicted ſtate of Belgia, thralled under *Philip* of Spaine, and *Don Iohn* of Auſtria his brother, of whoſe tyranny the poore Province being weary, they choſe by common conſent the Prince of Orange for their defendor and protector, and meeting him in a ſolemne aſſembly at the Towne of Gaunt, preſented him with a golden heart opened, with this Motto engraven about it, [SINCERITY.] And truly, brethren, to apply this, I ſay the true preſent of a ſoul won to God by the peace of reconciliation, is an heart (though not of gold, yet more pretious) even made of love and openneſſe, with ſincerity of affection: without this we cannot receive the Miniſter of Chriſt aright; we may blear his eyes with falſe colours, but God is not mocked. It behooves us to hope the beſt of all, whom we cannot convince of the contrary: But except this principle be ingrafted firſt, all other ſhewes will vaniſh, and a falſe heart muſt one way or other, bewray her ſelfe. This open ſincere heart, is the beſt preſent for a Preacher, and that which will doe great things if need be, as *Naaman* was here ready to do: It ſaith to the Miniſter, there is mine heart, take that in pawn, and the reſt will follow. But an iron cloſe hollow heart, is poiſon to a Miniſter. The Jeſuits begged of King *Henry* the fourth of France, that he would bequeath them his heart in token of his eſteeme, which they keep in a golden cup in one of their Chappells. Let us doe ſo to the Miniſter of Chriſt, and as I ſaid, let not Fryers and Jeſuits prevaile more with their votaries for their hearts, then faithfull meſſengers from heaven with their people. That which is well for the preſent among us, brethren, I commend: (If the Goſpel had not ſome friends, it could not be ſo well as it is) onely take heed, that bad times eclipſe it not: But I ſpeake as I doe, becauſe daies of peace, are not as daies of trouble; among ſome good hearts of ſincerity, many are hollow, and the beſt may amend, and learne to bee confirmed to doe that they doe, upon grounds of conſcience: And I deſire the Lord that without prejudice wee might heare this truth and receive it.

Aske thine heart whence is it, that my affections are ſo blunt, and dead towards Gods Miniſter? The more I am loved the leſſe I love, 2 Cor.12.15. What? Did his meſſage never pierce my ſoule? Did it never convince me to be a ranke enemy of God by nature? That the wrath or favour of the Almighty was my life or death? Did it never convince me of this, that the Lord Jehovah hath in the bloud of his owne ſonne, deviſed, offered, ſealed up a reconciliation, and that for me? Alas! what wonder, if the hearth of that Altar be cold, whereon Gods fire was never kindled. O Lord! work the ſenſe of the meſſage of immortality and life in me by the Spirit of grace, and then I ſhall behold the honour and worth of thy Miniſter with a ſpirituall eye, and that common baſe judgement of the world ſhall vaniſh! Then ſhall his feet be beautifull, his face and voice pretious, and his love above the
Job 33. love of any earthly object. Then ſhall I call him (with *Elihu*) one of a thouſand! For where one Miniſter cares for reconciliation himſelfe, or teacheth it to others, ſome others doe not; ſo they have the fleece, what care they whether men ſinke or ſwim! Oh! Now I ſee, its a rare grace for a Miniſter to priſe a ſoule, to tremble at the loſſe of it, to value

it

it at the price of the bloud of the eternall God and the loſſe thereof, as the ſpilling of the heart bloud of Chriſt! Oh Lord! Didſt thou meane a poore ſoule ſo well as to give him a part in this bloud? And to ſend me tidings thereof by the meſſenger of peace, thy Miniſter ſealing up that unto me on earth, which in heaven thou haſt granted me? My goodneſſe, my thanks cannot reach thee, but it ſhall fall upon thy Miniſter, whoſe bleſſed voice thou haſt cauſed to ſound in mine eares, and to convey thy love into my ſoule! I hope I ſhall not forget ſuch a Levite all my dayes! So much for this Uſe.

Fourthly and laſtly, this point is for Inſtruction, to teach us what duty we owe to God himſelfe. If to the Miniſter (a poore mortall worm) we owe ſuch honour and reverence, what then owe wee to God himſelfe? If we ſhould doe great things for the inſtrument of our peace, who is the meſſenger onely of glad tidings: What then owe we to him that is the fountaine of it, and him that ſends it from heaven to us? What ſhould ſeeme great unto us for ſuch kindneſſe? How ſhould wee carry our lives, liberties, ſoules and ſelves in our boſomes, ready to lay downe for him? What coſt, what price is ſo great, which ſhould part the Lord and us? As *Ephron* ſaid to *Abraham* touching the price of Machpelah, its worth ſo many ſhekels of ſilver, but what is that betweene me and thee? So ſhould we ſay, Oh what is my beſt treaſure worth Lord, in reſpect of loſing thy love and communion? Some ſhreds (I doubt not) we ſhould beteame him, what great thing would we doe for him? What vertue goes out of us? What ſtreames of our love and affection goe to him, from whoſe ſprings all proceed unto us? What ſingular thing doe we for him, who gave his Sonne to ſave enemies, and his Miniſter to bring us newes of it? Servants who attend royall Benefactors, love to ſeale their loyall love by ſome undeniable exploit and marke of extraordinary ſervice. As thoſe worthies of *David* would breake through an hoaſt of enemies to fetch him water; ſo great an hazard that *David* thought it a preſent meet for God: And all to teach us, that he whom great things do become to give, deſerves the greateſt from us, even the very neglect of life it ſelf, if he aske it! When I read of the ſtrange adventures of men for the pleaſing of their Lords and Commanders, methinks it ſhames us Chriſtians! Its recorded of the ſouldiers of *Charles* the fifth, who hearing that he deſired a way to be made for his army over a certaine broad River, then beſet with the ſhips of the enemy: They put their ſwords in their mouthes, and drew thoſe ſhips ſurpriſed to the ſhore, and conveied over the army in them? What was this but for the pleaſing of a mortall man? But when as (one day) the ſoule ſhall be ſummoned before God, and demanded by the Judge, what ſingular thing haſt thou done to put it out of queſtion, what love thou beareſt to me? What a wofull regret will it be when it can bethink it ſelfe of nothing, ſave ſhreds and parings?

We could beteame that God ſhould ſtraine himſelfe to a demonſtration of ſome great thing for us: If it were to make the Sunne ſtand ſtill, or goe backe ten degrees, to worke ſome miracle, or ſhew ſome ſigne from heaven of love to us, that it might appeare how great we are in his bookes! And we make ſmall account of ſmall bleſſings which others ſhare

Vſe 4.
Inſtruction.
If we owe the Miniſter great things, what owe we to God himſelfe?

Gen. 23. 15.

God will have his ſervants do ſome ſingular thing for him.

2 Sam. 23. 15.

2 Kings

ſhare in with us, who are leſſer then the leaſt. But what doe we picke out to reſalute him withall? How doe we curtall him of his ordinary dues rather, as thinking much of that? The Lord bad *Abraham* do a great thing for him, even kill his ſon, and he was ready to do it, and the Lord ſaid, Now I know that thou loveſt me indeed: But if he ſhould put us to ſuch ſelfe-deniall, or try us with hard duties, we rather would hang downe the head with that young man, and goe away ſorrowfull: So that he might ſay of us, I have tried thee now, and found, that thy wealth, thy liberty, wife, children are dearer to thee then my ſelfe, I will truſt thee no more! Oh how ſhould we tremble at this! How ſhould our baſe, penurious, ſcanty hearts, even ſtinke in our noſtrills and ſhame us! when that creeple looked ſtedfaſtly upon *Peter* and *Iohn*, all he gaped after was a penny or two of almes, but they beſtowed more then he deſired, and healed his lameneſſe. How (thinke wee) was hee aſtoniſhed? And how was *Salomon* raviſhed, when he had Gods anſwer? Even ſo which of us (brethren) that belong to God, can deny, but that he hath given us more then ever we could aske or thinke? But what have we done for him? Have we found out ſingular things for him? Deniall of our ſelves, forgoing of our wills, luſts, pleaſures for him? Nay, have we not taken our uttermoſt liberty in them? A good wife, husband, child, recovery out of ſickneſſe, have deſerved more from us, then ever we rendred? But what can we ſay, when his Chriſt is yet unpaid for?

Gen. 22.2.

Act.3.3.

1 King.3.15.

1631.

Now this deare yeare, which of us makes it our ſeaſon to doe great things for God? We know, that we doe for his members, wee doe for him: Where is the man who fellow-feeles this hard pinching yeare, and theſe priſes of corne and victualls? If you of the poorer ſort, would doe great things for God, even live by faith, and ſet up the promiſe and alſufficiency of God, above your hungry bellies and empty purſes, hee would doe great things for you! But (brethren) let the ſinnes of the poore goe, looke we to our owne and amend them. Be wee really pinched (in the feare of God) with their preſent miſeries. Say not with that churle, ſhall I take my fleſh and bread and give it theſe beggars! No, give a portion to ſix and to ſeven, the neceſſity of the time craves ſome ſingular thing. If now we come in with our common ſtuffe our ſinne ſhall be as great, as our denying them altogether at another time. Oh! it were a great thing if we would even feele a pinch in our owne ſelves while this pinch laſts, and abridge our diet, our apparrell, much more our feaſts and exceſſe, in an holy ſympathy of their pinch, and let our pinching and ſparing from our ſelves, become a reliefe of theirs and a bound to their refreſhing: Elſe wee ſhall pay full dearly for our baſenes! Sell a groat, a teſton, yea two (if need be) cheaper then every churle! Pinch your ſelves in your priſes, ſell your corne, eat your meat and put up gaines with leſſe ſweetneſſe, more pinching of ſorrow then at other times. If it were not (Lord thou knoweſt) for this pinching time, I would not be ſo ſcanty to my ſelfe as I am, but ſeeing I cannot abound my ſelfe, but I am prone to be ſcanty to others; therefore I will chuſe to ſcant my ſelfe, that I may bee enlarged to others: Let his (good brethren) be that ſingular thing wherein we declare our ſelves

1 Sam.25.

Common ſervice ſtinkes in Gods noſtrills in a ſeaſon of ſpeciall duty.

Satan who ſeeks thy bloud can prevaile for more then

ſelves to God. And if we do this in love, and be ſutable in other the like we ſhall have the reward of ſuch as doe great things for God, when as others doe little or nothing at all. Remember Satan himſelfe requires it and obtaines it at the hands of his ſervants. So much for the ground of this ſecond Argument. Now I come to the inference upon it.

Chriſt who ſhed his bloud for thee.

The ſecond branch of this Argument.

The which is, the application and urging of this truth upon their Maſter, If thou wilt do ſuch great things out of thy love to the Prophet, then ſhew it by reall obeying his counſell; *q.d.* elſe, all thy ſhews are naught worth.

Doctrine. True love and honour of Gods Prophets appears in our obeying them.

The point is, True love and honour to a Prophet, ſtands in obeying his voice. We ſee in common experience, if a man have a friend whom he ſeems to thinke highly of, yet if that friend perceive that in any caſe of importance and weight, his friend will ſooner hearken to any ſtranger then to him, and that he ſhall be of his court, but others of his counſell: What will he doe, thinke himſelfe regarded? No, he will conclude, ſurely this man ſlights my counſell and followes his owne wayes whatſoever I ſay, therefore for my part, I leave him to them who can ſway him more with their counſell then I can. How much more then is it thus with the Miniſter? If he ſee his people court him in their carriage, complement with him in ſpeech and curteſies, but ſtill abide the old men, reforme nothing amiſſe, goe on ſtill in their courſe, what ſhall he conclude? Surely this, I ſee this people loves me not, for I can prevaile with them in nothing, their owne waies they will take, though I teare my tongue to the ſtumps, therefore ſurely they love me little or not at all. But let us ſee firſt ſome Reaſons, then ſome Scriptures to prove the point, and ſo come to ſome uſe.

1. *Reaſon.* Firſt, they who love from the heart, will obey from the heart, becauſe there is a reciprocall affection of people to Miniſter as well as of Miniſter to God and Chriſt. Now the Miniſter out of a loyall heart of love to God and Chriſt, doth as he is bidden. God ſaith, If thou love me feed my lambes and my ſheep, elſe pretend no love to colour thy ſloth and negligence. Even ſo ſhould the Miniſter of God ſay to the people, If you love me obey my counſell, and do as I teach; elſe colour not over your falſhood with pretences: As the Miniſter is to carry himſelfe to God, ſo are they (under God) to carry themſelves to him. It will bee ſmally to their comfort, if all the obedience lye upon his ſhouldiers, for although he hath ſaved his owne ſoule, yet no thanke to them: But when there is a reciprocation of affection with the fruit of obedience, then ſhall neither grudge at other: Both ſtand in equall obligation to obey, if both performe it, there is mutuall cauſe of joy and love, but if one be faithfull to God, and the other unfaithfull to him, there will be unequall drawing in the yoake, and great cauſe of complaint.

Ezek. 18.

2. *Reaſon.* Secondly, there is an holy judiciouſneſſe and wiſdome in love, compelling the people to conſider, that the Miniſter preſſeth that he doth upon them, not as from himſelfe, but as from God; its nothing to him what they doe or doe not, he is but a ſervant, he is ſet over them for good, and to give an account to God for them; hee ſhall have his recompence for his worke, and his labour is with God; if then for conſcience he ſeekes their welfare, and counts it his crowne if they obey; its

Eſay 49.4.

2Kings

its equall and righteous that they requite love for love, duty for duty: That they ſet his crowne upon his head by their faithfull obedience. The buſineſſe concernes themſelves very ſadly, for the Miniſter preaches not, comforts not, exhorts not for his owne ends, but for theirs: If then he be for them and not himſelfe; ſhall they be able to anſwer it, if they be not for their owne ſoules? Alas! what ſhall the diſcouragement they afford to the Miniſter, hurt him? Shall it not redound to them? See Heb.13.17. That were ſmally to their comfort. He is from God, and as in the ſtead of Chriſt, doing his Embaſſage. As *Ieremy* ſpeakes to thoſe rebells, Chap. 44. Lo I am before you, you may anſwer me as you will: But know, that he who ſent me, will not be ſo eaſily anſwered, he will pay ye home for your rebellion. If the Miniſter be bound to follow God, and not cunning deviſes and fables of his own head, and muſt give a ſtrict account thereof to his Maſter: Woe be to them that perceive not nor lay to heart! What a ſolemne account will lye upon them if they diſpiſe that meſſage, which he delivers upon ſuch tearmes: He hath ſaved his ſoule, but thy bloud ſhall be upon thine owne head. True love then is judicious, (ſee 2 Cor.5.14.) and as in all other things, ſo in this; ſhe is loath to offer any meaſure to the Miniſter, which ſhe is loath God ſhould offer herſelfe.

2 Pet.1.16.

3. *Reaſon.*

Thirdly, love is marveilous tender. He then that loves his Miniſter, is very ſenſible of that griefe and diſcontent, which muſt needs ſmites his heart when he ſees his labours ſlighted, eſpecially if he be a man wholly ſet to ſeek Gods ends in preaching. A good heart will ſay, I warrant you, it ſtings the heart of him who teaches us ſoundly, to behold in us ſlight acceptance: Oh this will breed bad bloud! This will load him with ſorrow, and he hath no whither to goe for eaſe, but to him who ſet him on worke: And the Lord will take his wrongs to heart, and count them his owne, and that will prove ſad for us. Oh! let us not provide ſo ill, let us not cut downe the onely prop we ſtand on; let us condole him in his heavineſſe, and remove the cauſe of it; that ſo his heart being joyed, may procure a good errand to heaven in our behalfe, and bring downe a bleſſed anſwer from God unto us.

1 Cor. 13.

4. *Reaſon.*

Fourthly, love is given to eſteem highly of that which it loves, unites it and ſtrengthens it ſelfe in the object delighted in, ſhe ſets it up in her heart exceedingly, and good cauſe why; for love proceeds from ſome convinced amiableneſſe and worth in the thing loved, and that reflects backe honour and eſteeme. Now if it be ſo, then love of a Miniſter will breed honour to him, under God, neither under his worth nor above it, but ſutable to it; contrariwiſe, if there be ſmall or no love, what will the anſwer be? Tuſh! what is he? He is but a man as others, yea and perhaps a weake one, a man of paſſions and frailties: So then marke: A loveleſſe heart deſpiſeth a Miniſter, ſhames him, is as rottenneſſe to his bones, thwarts the doctrine, makes all that behold him in the mirror of ſuch people to thinke, they have a Miniſter of like diſpoſition to themſelves, elſe (for ſhame) they would not be ſo baſe.

I conclude then, true love will deviſe with her ſelfe, what will grace and magnifie the Miniſter and his labours, and finding that nothing will do it ſo much as the obeying of his voice; they will force and compell

pell themselves out of the meer nature of their love to obey him to the uttermost, cost it them never so much the setting on; as face answers face in water; so doth the life of an hearer who loves his Minister answer his labours. Love must needs destroy it selfe, if it should disesteem her object; therefore she honoureth that, as she would support herselfe. So much for Reasons.

Prover b.

This point, first affords Terror to all basely minded men, who live in the utter hatred and scorne of their Ministers, thwarting, vexing and crossing them to the uttermost, in stead of obeying: Such as Jer. 44. 16. openly tell him, The word of God which thou spakest unto us we will not heare it: Such as live at open defiance with the Minister, asking, Shall this fellow reigne over us? No: Shall we be tyed to his girdle? We scorne it: Let us cast his cords from us! What Lord shall controll us? Our tongues, our spirits and wayes are our owne: Shall he teach us to marry, to buy, sell, keep company, use our liberties? Shall he come among us to forestall our pleasures, our wills and lusts? Cannot wee tell as well as he what is good for us? He serves us and lives upon us; and shall we maintaine our servant to be in our tops? Oh base wretch! He is thy servant for thy good, but made so by God, not a slave; but a free honourable Minister of reconciliation, not to serve thy humours, but to controll them: And (as I said before) then they will runne and ride, and lay their purses together, nay set on all the mastives of the Country against them to worry them out! But oh wofull creatures! Reproach of Ministers, shame and spots of assemblies, you need not to hunt them out: Read but that in Mica 2. 6. 7. and there you shall finde God himself will doe it for you: You say, prophesie not: But I say, they shall not prophesie unto such, lest they take shame: I will not suffer their faces to be covered with such confusion, as to be plagued with such: I will rid them from among such, and carry them to a people that love them: As for these haters of them, when as once their shepheards are gone, I will come in among them and worry them that worried these: And I will let in a flood upon them of woe, when my *Noa's* are taken into mine Arke: That which they sought for, revenge of my Minister; I will inflict as a revenge upon them, and when they see themselves left to be consumed by those lusts of theirs, which they scorned to be rooted out by him, then they shall roare for very anguish, some here under penury, rags, shame, diseases and impenitency, some in hell; but then one houre of a faithfull Minister shall not be given them if they had the world to give for it. Beware lest (seeing the fearefull examples of vengeance in Scripture for contempt of the Minister, besides daily experience of the sudden end of scorners and persecutors, will not draw you from your trade) God make you examples for others to take warning by. See and tremble at the examples of *Ahabs* ruine upon contempt of *Micaja*: Those Jewes in Egypt for despising of *Jeremy*, the whole Nation of them both then and after, for rejecting the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles; and rather make use of such to prevent destruction. Briefly, peruse these Texts, Jer. 26. 18. Josh. 22. 17. &c.

Vse 1. Terror. Two or three Branches.

Psal. 2. 12.

They that live at open defiance with their Ministers, are odious.

Ezek. 3. 26.

1 King. 22. 32. Jer. 44.

A second branch of Terror may reach to such, as will first qualifie their Minister in his charges & counsells, and then they will obey him,

2. Branch.

2 Kings

There be other Miniſters which will do the like to their people, till they have made them like to themſelves.

People that will ſeem to love their Miniſter that they may lurke in their ſins, odious.

but not till then. It is irkeſome unto them to obey him in the Lord in matters of conſcience: For why? Their hearts are licentious, carnall and prophane: And yet they thinke it a diſgrace to live otherwiſe then lovingly and curteouſly with their Miniſter. What courſe then take they? Surely this, they will firſt try whether they can by policy, by kind offices, feaſting and entertaining of him, pull him into their company, and draw him into the fellowſhip of their pleaſures, games and merriments: Theſe (they thinke) will be leaſt ſuſpected, and having ſnared him by theſe, then they ſeeke by degrees to fetch him into the Alehouſe, to drinke and be a good fellow: Then they inject a ſuſpition and jealouſie into his minde againſt ſuch as feare God, and oppoſe them in their baſe evills: Then to whet his tongue in the pulpit againſt them, to fleſh and encourage themſelves in their liberties and luſts: And ſo by theſe meanes having baned him, and made him for their turne, they will obey him, good reaſon: For they have firſt made him ſure enough, and for their tooth, they have taught him to be a meet Cooke for their appetite, and to dreſſe their meat their owne way, with the ſawce that likes them beſt, therefore they may well venture to eat of it. Oh baſe creatures! Doe ye firſt crooke the rule by which you are to write, and doe ye then write after it? Thus it was with him, 1 King. 21. who being ſent for *Micaja* to *Ahab*, would needs teach him his leſſon by the way: Let (I pray thee) thy words be ſutable to the words of the foure hundred Prophets, and then my Maſter will ſurely doe as thou biddeſt him. Doe thou flatter and claw him, and then he will obey thee. So doe many to their Miniſters: They will preſcribe him what truths hee ſhall teach them, and what he ſhall balke, they will tell him what method he ſhall uſe, be much in diſcourſe, and little in application, preach ſmooth and pleaſing things, and then they will heare him. But oh wofull people! Is this to heare him or to obey your luſts?

Note.

When *Iehoiada* was dead, the Text tells us, that his Princes came to *Ioaſh*, and finding him a facile and flexible man, they ingratiated themſelves with him by gifts and rewards, by praiſes and flatteries, till they had drawne his ſpirit away from God to Idolls, and to ſerve their own baſe turne. Oh ſay they! We are all thy loyall ſubjects and friends, willing to be thy ſervants: But we ſee that except thou hearken in the point of Religion to thy people, they will ſcarce continue in their loyall obedience: Wherefore it is much for thy ſafety and honour to yeeld to them, and elſe it will create much trouble in thy Kingdome: And even thus fares it with people of this ranke towards their Miniſter. For the love of their luſts, what will they not doe? Oh, Sir, ſay they, we ſee you are a man of worth and learning, and you make us good Sermons, we ſhould be glad to live and love together, and we hope you will be faire and curteous to us: We love to keepe our Church and live honeſtly: Indeed we are ſhy of them that are ſo zealous and preciſe in their preachings, as to ſcare their good people, we would be loath the hearts of your Pariſh ſhould be alienated from you, which we ſee will be if you be againſt our liberties, pleaſures and good fellowſhips: Hitherto we have lived well and like kinde neighbours, and we hope you will further rather then hinder it, and ſo doing, we ſhall live in peace

2 Chron. 24. 17.

and

and good will with you: Oh how ſuch ſmooth perſons fret like a canker! How eaſily doe they prevaile with ſuch as are not armed with prevention? Alas! they are taken and ſnared by ſuch baites, and that little ſparkle of good which ſeemed to be in them, is ſoone quenched! But to finiſh this Uſe, beware (O Miniſter of God) leſt thou be deceived with ſuch cunning of men! and as for them that do ſo entice them, that they might the more ſecurely live in their luſts: Wöe be unto them! they may ſeeme to make a league with hell, to provide a ſafety and immunity to their luſts: But the Lord will breake their league and put a ſpirit of diviſion betweene them, ſo that they ſhall be as bitter enemies as ever they were friends, and all becauſe their union was curſed, and tyed by the band of their luſts: (As *Sampſons* Foxes were tyed by their tailes with firebrands to doe miſchiefe) but not with the band of grace and love, which would have held for continuance. So much for this point of Terror.

Vſe 2. Reproofe. 1. Branch. Lovers of the Miniſter in generall, yet concealing their doubts and caſes from them, reproved.

Now a ſecond Uſe may be Reproofe of ſundry ſorts. And firſt, of all ſuch hearers as profeſſe to love the Miniſter of God, and comply with him in generall; but ſtill hold off aloofe in point of counſell and advice concerning their particular actions: Doubts they have many touching their eſtates to Godward, alſo many difficulties they meete with in their courſe in matters of weight; but they will never acquaint their Miniſter with any of them, he ſhall bee one of the firſt of them that ſhall bee laſt acquainted with them: Partly through folly, ſtrangeneſſe, and darkeneſſe of their ſpirit, partly through baſe feare, leſt their wants ſhould be diſcovered; and eſpecially becauſe (in truth) they are not willing to bee eaſed thereof, but ſtill to ſtagger, and are reſolved to conſult with fleſh and bloud, rather then to be ruled by knowledge. Such as theſe the Miniſter ſhall never heare of, till ſorrow and repentance compell them to utter their folly; when they ſee they have overſhot themſelves in their bargaines, or marriages, till conſcience beginne to ſting them for their unjuſt and unwarranted courſes; or God croſſe them with loſſes, ſhame, enemies, then (too late) they come for counſell, which if they had ſought for in ſeaſon, all this had beene prevented.

2. Branch. ſuch as firſt vow and then enquire, doe badly.

Others, when they have taken their owne courſe and bound ſure; then for faſhion, they will make ſhew of conſulting with a Miniſter, making him beleeve that they adviſe with him upon equall termes; whereas in truth, they make him but a ſtalkinghorſe, telling their owne tale ſo faire, that they pull ſome word of allowance from him, that ſo they may ſay, they went to worke by advice; ſo if any thing befall amiſſe, he ſhall beare the brunt of it: But if it fall out that he diſſwade and oppoſe their purpoſe, they have made ſure beforehand to follow their owne counſell: And I have had experience of ſuch, that whereas they have ſeemed to weepe and bewaile ſome luſts and corruptions of theirs, or to hearken to reaſons diſſwading them from raſh changing of their callings, or entring upon dangerous marriages, or to reſtore goods gotten badly, or the like; whereas the ſimple Miniſter thought they meant plainly as they ſpake; when hee enquires afterwards of ſuch, perhaps hee heares ſome of theſe who ſo

2 Kings

wept and bemoaned themſelves, are ordinary drunkards, or uncleane wretches; others were ſure of their changes ere they conſulted, others continue in their extortion or uſury ſtill; but none of them ſought counſell directly, but to make ſemblance of that, is not in them, or to get the opinion of teachable ones, or to ſtoppe the mouth of accuſing conſcience for the preſent, or to prevent ſome ill report of themſelves, which they more feare the Miniſter ſhould know, then themſelves ſhould commit.

I have knowne ſome who have earneſtly beſought the Miniſter to come to their houſe, and to meete with ſome friends to prevent haunting of their houſes with looſe company, who (when the Miniſter is come) are about the practice of lewd fellowſhip, and drinking the ſelfe ſame morning; and others who have pittifully bewailed, how raging, ſhrewiſh, froward they are, vowing to curbe theſe paſſions, who yet are found to returne to them after with more violence then ever, when they have had ſome word of comfort upon hope of their humiliation. *Salomon* hath a Proverb of ſuch as vow firſt, and then enquire, ſaying, it is not good: Firſt, to commit ſacriledge, and then aske whether it bee lawfull. Theſe may mocke men and their owne conſcience, but God is not mocked. And to conclude this Uſe.

3. Branch. Very teachable men in ſhew, yet perſiſters in thoſe ſins which are reproved, are diſſemblers.

Thirdly, this alſo reproves all ſuch as pretend to bee very faire and propenſe in taking counſell, but when all is done, ſtill they will follow their owne courſe. They are ſo tractable (in ſhew) that the Miniſter ſeemes to admire them: For why? Whereas ſome are ſo rough and ſtout, that no man may ſpeake to them againſt their rebellious courſes; lo, theſe are ſo faire, that you may ſay what you pleaſe unto them; admoniſh, convince, rebuke and adviſe them, you cannot perceive any word or paſſion to come from them which might offend. Who would not now thinke theſe men to be the onely obedient ones and to be ruled? But marke them, ſtill they are the ſame men, their tongues as unruly, their families as ungoverned, their marriages as perverſe, themſelves as diſordered: For why? They are moulded by a cuſtome into this dangerous habit to ſuffer you to ſay any thing, they have Aſſes eares, talke what you will, you ſhall have a nod and be endured, but there is no heart in them to obey, no ſtrength to bee ruled.

1 King. 22.

Thus *Iehoſhaphat* hearing the falſe Prophets, would needs have *Micaja* ſent for, but to what purpoſe? Indeed he would heare him ſpeak, and perhaps would have wiſhed *Ahab* to be ruled by him: But when he would not, did he tremble to joine with him, or deſiſt from the enterpriſe? No, but ſtill continued this trade with him and his ſonne *Ieboram*, and married his ſonne to a daughter of that Idolatrous family which was their ruine! Such a deſperate ſlyneſſe, or fillineſſe, or weakeneſſe, there is in many, that winde themſelves by this ſmoothneſſe, out of all mens fingers, that they may roll backe into the armes of their accuſtomed habits and humours, whatſoever hath beene ſaid to the contrary. The thicke haile falling upon the tiles of houſes doth as much pierce and breake them, as counſell prevailes with

Simil.

theſe,

theſe, as the one rebounds backe as faſt as it comes, ſo doth every droppe of counſell paſſe away from theſe. Their honour to the Miniſter, is to give him the hearing with both eares; but to obey him in nothing: Far are theſe from him that ſaid, The Lord hath opened me an eare, I was not rebellious. But I have lengthened out my ſpeech beyond the due limits of the time: Here therefore I ceaſe for the preſent, leaving the reſt till another ſeaſon.

Let us pray, &c.

2 Kings

Eſay 50. 5.

The end of the Fourtenth Lecture.

THE FIFTEENTH LECTVRE

Still continued upon this thirteenth VERSE.

VERSE XIII.

And his ſervants came neere, and ſaid unto him, Father, if the Prophet had bid thee doe ſome great thing, wouldeſt thou not have done it? How much more then, when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh and be clean?

VERSE 14. *Then he went downe to Iorden, and dipped himſelfe &c.*

2 Kings

Returne to the former uſe of Reproofe.

WEE ended the laſt Lecture (brethren) with the latter uſe of Reproofe, in the proceſſe whereof, we were cut off: But the point was, a ſharpe rebuke to all ſmooth people, who will heare all, and ſay as you ſay, but hold their owne and doe as they liſt. They ſeeme to want a bottome, all that is ſaid leaketh as faſt out as it was powred in, for lacke of a digeſting and retentive ſpirit, which their frothy vanity cannot admit. It ſhould ſeeme that thoſe Jewes were ſuch, who when *Moſes* declared Gods covenant to them, told him the word of the Lord was good, they would obey all: But the Lord cries out, This people have ſaid well in all they have ſpoken: But oh, that there were ſuch an heart in them to doe it, to feare and obey, that it might goe well with them! And this ſinne ſeemed to runne in a bloud with them, for the Lord tells *Ezekel* thus, This people will ſit and heare thy voice as the voice of a muſitian, yea thou art to them as one that ſingeth pleaſantly to an inſtrument, ſo are they catcht with thy words: But they will not doe as thou ſaieſt; for their hearts goe ſtill after their owne covetouſneſſe: They are as ſlye fiſhes, which will get out at one maſh or other of the net.

Deut. 5.29.

Ezek. 33. ult.

To finiſh this Uſe therefore, let all ſuch know, that as it is ſinfull baſh-

baſhfulneſſe for them, to conceale themſelves from their Miniſter, whoſe lips are to preſerve knowledge: So it is double ſinne and ſubtilty in them to adviſe with him for their owne ends, and to uſe him onely as a ſtale, when as their hearts are bent their owne way: The former are their own worſt enemies: But the latter trench upon the honour of God, the eſteeme of the Miniſter, the peace of their owne ſoules, and therefore muſt be renounced.

Vſe 3. Exhortation. Obedience to the Miniſter urged.

But to proceed. This point in the third place affords exhortation to all who deſire to approve their love to the Miniſter of God, that they do as entirely obey his voice in all things, that God by him convinces them of, as they would be loth to forfeit the repute of their love. Its almoſt counted as treaſon now to ſtrive with the Prieſt, he is thought halfe a Publican, who lives in any conteſt with the Miniſter, or is ill affected to him, and yet he or ſhe are as rare to be found almoſt as black ſwans, who obey their Miniſter for Gods cauſe. Therefore as we would love him (or God rather in him) ſo be we ſure we obey him. Wherein, you will ſay? I anſwer, ſince the holy Ghoſt hath traced out the way himſelfe: I will inſiſt in his owne ſteps. One ſolemne proofe of obeying the voice of the Miniſter is, to beleeve Gods promiſe. Receive not the grace of God in vaine: Be reconciled to God. Who is among you (ſaith *Eſay*) that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that walketh in darkeneſſe and hath no light? Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay himſelfe upon his God: Let him not compaſſe himſelfe about with ſparkes, nor walke in the light of his own fire which he hath kindled.

Eſay 50.10.11. 2 Cor. 5.20. & 6.1.

1. Some Inſtances of the obedience of love.

Marke: This is a ſound triall of obeying the Miniſter, if we ſhall deny our owne wills and carnall reaſon, reject all our falſe colours and exceptions, and embrace the promiſe of the Goſpel, to beleeve and be ſaved. This is the weighteſt charge that God hath given him to urge, and it is the greateſt ſeal which we can ſet to his Miniſtery, if we beleeve it. In this one obedience we lay the foundation of obeying all the reſt. Its like *Naamans* obeying *Eliſha*, to waſh and be cleane; if *Naaman* had obeyed twenty other charges beſides, what had it booted him? But in this he obeyed all. Doe not then ſullenly abide in thy darkeneſſe and unbeleefe ſtill, becauſe thou art darke, but the rather, abhorre that rebellious proud heart of thine, which would keep thee in bondage or ſtaggering, and come to Gods promiſe, his light and heat, and that ſhall comfort thee, quicken thee, humble and enlarge thee. As *Naamans* heart grew enlarged to God and the Prophet by his obeying that one charge, ſo that he thought nothing too deare for them, ſo ſhall thine. It will make thee free to obey, not (as he being croſſed) to goe away ſorrowfull; but to lye downe at his feet, ſaying, Speake Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.

2. So alſo, be exhorted not to reſt here, but proceed to other obedience: Doth he deſire thee to ſeal to his Miniſtery by living amiably and ſubjectly in thy marriage, husband and wife, each to other? Doth hee charge thee to acquaint thy ſelfe with God in ſecret? To ſet up his worſhip in thy family? To keepe bounds in the uſe of thy lawfull liberties, and not to take thy uttermoſt? To fellow-feele the miſeries of the diſtreſſed?

2Kings

diſtreſſed? To ſerve God in thy time? Mourne for the abominations of all ſtates, and the miſeries which they have juſtly procured? Oh then obey him! Hee hath warrant to enjoine thee, this taske hee himſelfe obeyes with thee, and ſuffers as thou doſt: Wilt thou leave him as an owle in the wilderneſſe, and not beare him company?

3. So againe, put caſe that he entreats thee from God to lay aſide thy peeviſhneſſe, thy wrath, thy worldlineſſe? Doth he tell thee they are the ey-ſores of his Miniſtery? It vexes his righteous heart to behold them! It joyes him to ſee them ſubdued in thee! Oh comfort him in renouncing them! Thou knoweſt how to ſting him, and how to cheere his heart! His honour and content reſts in thy hand, it is in thee to ſadden or to ſolace him: Be not ſo cruell as to deſtroy thine owne chiefe prop under God: If he ſhall ſay, O deare friend, as you love me, obey me in reforming and purging your family and children of their abuſes, their running out to drunken companies and unſeaſonable meetings, their gariſh attires and proud faſhions; I tell you its your and my diſhonour, that in other things you ſeeme Religious, but in theſe as looſe as others. Perhaps ye will not openly ſet up May-poles and Morris-dauncings to fret me, but you will ſuffer your ſervants to breake the Sabbath, which your ſelves would ſeem to keep: What ſhall we thinke of this? Surely (to ſay no more) you ſhall give mee leave to know my friends from my foes in theſe your doings: How can you ſay you love me, when your heart is not with me.

2 Cor.6.11. 12.13.

Judg.15.16.

Urging of the Exhortation.

Brethren, ſhew what kindneſſe you pleaſe in other regards to your Miniſter, pay him his dues, ſend him what gratuities you will; but know, if he be a Miniſter of Chriſt, the maine ſcope of his heart and pitch of his ambition, is, to ſit neer your hearts in the power of his commands and Miniſtery; all other things are but the killing him with kindneſſe, and breaking of his head to give him a plaiſter, if you obey not from the heart; love is alway content to be taught and to obey, not to teach or preſcribe; be content then to love him as he from God ſhall appoint thee, and not as thou thy ſelf wouldeſt, and put caſe thou ſhouldeſt perſwade thy Miniſter thou loveſt him (by ſome other marks) it were his folly to thinke ſo, but it is nevertheleſſe thy ſinne. When thy Miniſter comes firſt to thee, he findes thee a man of a double heart to God; he ſtrives to draw thee to ſincerity and plainneſſe, he findes thee very ignorant, and ſeekes to breed knowledge of God and thy ſelfe in thee; he findes thee a man of an inconſtant frame and not to be truſted, or proud, ambitious and vaine-glorious, or perhaps contentious, covetous, ſtout, wilfull and rebellious, and labours to change thee; thou ſaiſt thou loveſt him: Doth his love then prevaile with thee to reforme theſe vices, or art thou ſtill the ſame man, ſo that he may hope as ſoon to alter the skin of a Black-more, as to alter them? Then I ſay thou lieſt, for thou loveſt him not. As that young man comming to Chriſt, told him many things that he did and had done from his youth: But our Saviour anſwers him, yet one thing remaines, Sell all, and all is well; ſo ſay I to thee, in thy paying of tithes, in thy friendly aſſiſtance and countenance, thou doſt well, but one thing ſtill remaines, obey him, and then it will appeare, that the other are not done to blanch and daub over

Tokens of our love to the Miniſter in other kinds, are no markes of ſound love, except obedience follow.

Jerem.

over thine hypocriſie, but from an heart of love and obedience. I have known ſome looſe profeſſors who have ſought to exceed all other their neighbours in the love of a godly Preacher, and who but they, in their running, riding, aſſiſting of him? They have been as his right hand of truſt and ſervice: But lo, in a ſhort time theſe fellows bewray that which lay ſecret, to wit, an uncleane, covetous, voluptuous heart; and what then? Surely all men ſee evidently that theſe clave to the Miniſter for their owne baſe ends, and to conceale their vices.

A ſpeciall watchword to all Miniſters of God to beware how farre they engage themſelves in the love of any profeſſors, who make toward them in ſpeciall relation: Try them throughly in their obedience, as well as their pretended love; or elſe the time may come, when as their baſeneſſe ſhall diſcredit your perſons and Miniſtery farre more then all their love could prevaile. If when all is done, they are ſo ſubtill that we cannot eſpy them, the ſigne ſhall be theirs, wee have ſaved our owne ſoules, and may waſh our hands in innocency, becauſe we have done our duties.

A caveat to Miniſters. See Joh. 2. 24. 25.

Miniſters reproach themſelves in aſcribing too much and truſting too far ſuch as they know not.

When all is done, (therefore) this will hold water if we obey: So ſaith the Apoſtle, Obey them that are ſet over you: And *Paul*, I beare you witneſſe, you obeyed the forme of doctrine delivered unto you: And againe, you received our doctrine, not as the word of man, but as the word of God: Every good hearer ſhould ſay to his Miniſter as *Eliſha* did to *Gehazi*, Went not thy ſpirit with me when I ranne after the man? So, did not the ſpirit of my faithfull Paſtor goe with me when I was in ſuch a company, recreation or worldly buſineſſe? Me thought it curbed me from lightneſſe and vanity, from deceit, from ſinning in my tongue, or in any diſguiſement of intemperancy, or couſenage, or covetouſnes, to think, if he now ſaw me, how ſhould I be aſhamed to do thus? Oh! he loves me tenderly & my ſouls welfare, and ſhould I grieve him thus? This is indeed to be the Epiſtle of the Miniſter written in our hearts, approving our love unto him to purpoſe. Not that there is not a ſtronger motive then this, to awe and draw people from good to evill, for there is an holy Spirit of annointing which is given to all good ones, which hath ſhed the love of Chriſt into their hearts, and filled them with the length and bredth of it; this ſhould hem in the ſoules of beleevers, (for ſo the word is, 2 Cor. 5. 7.) and compell them to watch over themſelves: This muſt bee the chiefe Monitor in the Schoole of Chriſt: If the voice of this great Prophet be not obeyed for it ſelfe, the voice of the ſervant (as he is called, Eſay 50.) will be little worth: For what wonder if they diſobeyed the voice of *Moſes* the meſſenger of God, Heb. 2. 2. 3. who rebelled againſt that holy Spirit which ſet him on worke, and vexed it all thoſe forty yeares, as it is Eſay 63. 11. No it muſt be the ſpirit of the Maſter which muſt make his Steward eſteemed: The love of the Lord Jeſus, muſt make the love of the Miniſter compulſive, elſe it will prove nothing but ſlaviſh feare, or to avoid baſe ſhame; as we ſee in many a drunkard, or ſwearer, who for the preſence ſake of a ſinfull man, will (for an houre or two) bite in their qualities, which yet they tremble not to commit in the preſence of God all the yeare long. Conclude this point then and ſay, I

Heb. 13.

2 King. 5. end.

2 Cor. 3. 2.

pre-

pretend love to my Minister, how shall I demonstrate it really? As *Cornelius* did, Act. 10. Its said, he fell downe and tooke *Peter* by the feet in token of excessive love and respect: But what, was this all? No surely: But this, that he tells him, They were all ready to hearken to whatsoever the Lord said unto them by him: This was a sure marke; love and feare make reverence, and thence comes obedience.

When love is solid it workes by feare, and causes a loathnesse to doe any thing which might grieve the Minister; it sits like *Mary* at the feet of the Minister ready to obey: And that not onely in slight matters to remove some sinne which may be spared, as *Saul* that killed the leane cattell and the baser sort of *Amalek*; but even the belovedst lust and most pretious vice, even the fat cattell, and the King himselfe: True love abhorres common evidence, its painfull, it will be singular, and aske, what singular thing doe I to approve my love? When our Saviour would try *Peters* love, he askes him, Lovest thou me more then these? As some think he meant of his nets & occupation, as others of his fellow Apostles. Both will do well: Love thy Minister by obeying more then others, yea love him more then thy nets, thy beloved trade, thy lusts which bring thee in the greatest gaine, thy sweet usury, thy gaming, thy deceit, which others (who love him not) would as soone lose their lives as forgoe: The forfeit of these will import strongly that thou lovest not him for any by respect, but as he is a Minister of God. I remember a story of Pope *Pius* the fifth, (one that was reputed as humble as a proud Pope might be) who being told of a base fellow that had much abused him in a Pasquill; answered, I sustaine two persons, one of a poore Monk, another of Christs Vicar, if thou hast railed upon me as a Monk, I pardon thee, if as Pope, I must punish thee. So there is no true Minister of Christ who lookes at himselfe as a man, but at the honour of him whose servant he is, and to whom he desires all the peoples obedience should be derived. Try therefore whether thy lusts can draw thee stronglier then he; if two loadstones draw both together, the iron will goe to the strongest: So let thy love goe to him from thy lust. Fleire not in his face, nor beare him faire in hand, when as yet thine heart goes another way. Doe nothing behinde his backe, which thou wouldest not doe before him: In all thy doubtfull matters consult with him, let him come within thy bosome, know thy secrets, and hide nothing from him, wherein he can informe thee, for he is for God and Christ, as a faithfull Embassadour for thy good. Doth he tell thee, O my friend, I perceive your zeale quales shrewdly in this Laodicean age, you heare oft, but sleep much at Sermons, you jangle so much of earthly businesse upon the Sabbath, that I feare you meditate little: Or, you are zealous, but you grow not in knowledge, wisdome, tendernesse, to manage your zeal aright from rashnesse and censoriousnes: Or, you are noted to be full of words or a busie body: Or, you are given to flout and jeere when you are in company: Or, you are bold to dally with women: Or, you are too idle in your calling, and runne up and downe needlesly: Or, you faile in compassion to the poore, or doe small good with that you have, you are hard and sore in dealings, or make no conscience of keeping promise, in all which respects the Gospel suffers, and the

1 Sam. 15.

Matth. 5. 47. Joh. 21.

1 Cor. 5. 10.

the Lord (with your own credit and Miniſtery) lye at the ſtake: I beſeech you, if you love me, as you profeſſe to doe, amend theſe, I ſay obey him in all, and be earneſt with God and him to make thy love effectuall herein, that thou maieſt appeare not to love in word, but in deed and truth. And ſo much for this Exhortation.

Vſe ult. Miniſters muſt love only for procuring obedience to the truth.

And for the Miniſter, one word let me adde. That which in the greene tree is not to be ſuffered, how much leſſe in the dry? If people muſt not equivocate with their Miniſter, much leſſe may he with them. Doe not ſeeke favour with the people, and ſeeme to love them to any other ends, ſave to draw them to obey thy Doctrine. If thou wilt needs ſeem great with them, improve all thine intereſt for God and their good: Seeke not to idolize thy ſelfe in any mans heart and affections for thine own ends, that thou mighteſt either magnifie thy perſon above other Miniſters, or get the reputation of ſome great perſon (as *Magus* did) or enlarge thine eſtate and preferments: But in all let it appeare, that thou ſeekeſt them, not theirs; and as a ſervant of Chriſt thou ſeekeſt to ſet up him, though with thine owne abaſement. As thou uſeſt thy ſelfe, ſo will it appeare in thy courſe what thou aimeſt at; and if once people ſmell what thou ſeekeſt, thou ſhalt both draw flatterers enough, (as being meet covers for thy cup) and deterre all that make conſcience from honouring thee from the heart: For why? Under colour of ſerving thy Maſter, thou tradeſt for thy ſelfe, and diſcovereſt thy ſelf to bee a meer Sycophant, not caring which end goes forward, ſo thou canſt worke thine owne ends. Not much unlike thoſe timeſervers, the Princes of *Iouſh*, who came and did him great homage, but why? To draw his heart from God to Idolls, and their owne purpoſes, and thoſe leaguers in France, in King *Henry* the fourth his time, for the alienating of his heart from the Proteſtant Religion, which proved the ruine of them both. But of this in the next Argument.

2 Cor. 12. 14.

Laſtly, here is Conſolation to all ſuch as ſecond their affection to the Miniſter of God, with entire and ſincere obeying his voice. Thou canſt doe little for thy Miniſter perhaps, but this thou doeſt, thou obeyeſt him: Its a ſigne unto thee that thy love is ſincere unto him (and which is better) to the Lord himſelfe, to the meſſage he brings; nay its a ſigne thy heart is in love with the truths of God, his commands, threats and promiſes; It argues thou loveſt all the Miniſters of God without diſſimulation or partiality, (a rare gift, and hardly found, for each man will have his owne *Paul*, *Cephas* or *Apollo*.) Nay, to conclude, its a ſigne that there are many graces in thee, faith purging thy conſcience, humility and ſelfe-deniall, all ſaving graces. This obeying is above all ſacrifices, and fat of lambes, yea more to be rejoyced in then ſo many jewells. Could but I prove this in you (my beloved) who throng to heare, and looke me in the face to pull out my words out of my mouth, I ſhould not need to comfort you or praiſe you: Wiſdome is juſtified by her children, your ſelves ſhould praiſe you in the gates though I were ſilent. And as the babe ſprang in the wombe of *Elizabeth* when *Mary* came neare her, ſo ſhould your hearts leap in your boſomes while you heare me ſpeake; and as thoſe two Diſciples going to Emmaus, Luke 22. ſo ſhould you beare me witneſſe this day, and ſay, Did not our

Vſe 4. Comfort.

1 Cor. 3. 4.

Matth. 11. 19.

Luke 1.

2 Kings

our hearts burne within us while he applied his doctrine? But well may this use come in the last place, for they are fewest whom it may truly concerne. And so much for this second Argument of the Servants, drawne from his love to the Prophet. Now I come to the Third.

3. Argument. The sincerity of the Prophet

And that is couched closely, but effectually in these words, How much more when he saith unto thee, Wash and be cleane? As if they should say, Alas! What seekes the Prophet in all this his charging thee to wash in Jorden? What, doth he expect a reward of thee? Doubtlesse, then he would not so effectedly have kept in and refused to talke with thee, he would then have sought thy face as a Prince bringing great gifts, flattered and fawned on thee for his owne vantage: But now behold, he simply and sincerely tells thee Gods message, looking at nothing else: That which he urges is nakedly this, that for thine owne good thou mightst wash and be cleane. If he had sought from thee some great matter for himselfe, (though no doubt, thou wouldest easily have yeelded to that also, yet) then he might with more colour have beene suspected: But now, since he hath no further reach then thy cure and welfare, entirely desiring thy good, and loath to see thee returne home with thy disease, why shouldest thou not yeeld to him and wash? Shall he seeme more heartily to wish thy happinesse then thou thine owne? That were to be doubly blindefolded with passion, neither to see his love, nor to wish thine owne good. This being their argument, it affords us this observation. That its a strong motive to all (who are not perversly led by their own self-love) to hearken to counsell, when it shall appeare, that he who gives it is sincerely affected to the party counselled, without any respect to his owne advantage. And in very deed, it is that argument by which (throughout the Scriptures) the holy Ghost pleads audience. *Samuel* being to urge the Israelites to repent and return againe into covenant with God, and to contest with them for their Rebellion, beginnes with this argument, Behold here I am, witnesse against me, before the Lord, Whose Oxe or Asse have I taken? Whom have I defrauded or oppressed? Of whose hands have I taken bribes to blinde mine eies? *q. d.* If it were thus, my mouth might be stopt in my conviction. The Apostle *Paul*, Act. 20.31.23. 34. being to presse those Elders of Ephesus to tread in his steps, and to conceale nothing of Gods truth from his Church, urges his owne patterne, I have coveted no mans silver, gold, nor apparell, yea your selves know, that these hands have ministred unto my necessities, and to yours who have been with me; and by this rule he bids them proceed, pleading that golden speech of Christ: Its a more blessed thing to give then receive. The same Apostle, 2 Cor. 12.14.15.16. being to draw the Corinths to listen to his charges, cleers himselfe from all imputation of seeking himself & insincerity: This third time am I ready to come unto you, and I will not be burthensome, for I seeke not yours, but you: I will gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more I love you, the lesse I am loved; but be it so, yet I did not burthen you, yet being crafty, I taught you by guile. Note how he opposes his craft to the false Apostles, their craft was to catch that they had, but *Pauls* to

Explication of the ground.

Sincerity in a counsellor, claimes acceptance.

1 Sam. 12.3.

catch

catch them. Not to be endleſſe, take another Text, which reacheth to another kinde of falſhood, *viz.* the exalting of himſelf in their thoughts, 2 Cor. 11. being there urging them againſt thoſe Impoſtors which diſparaged his perſon, he ſaith, Have I committed any offence in abaſing my ſelfe, that you might be exalted? Or in preaching freely? I was chargeable to no man: and 2 Cor. 7. 2. being to joine iſſue with the maine doctrine of Chriſt, he argues thus, Brethren, receive us, we have wronged no man, corrupted, defrauded no man, *q. d.* you may beleeve us the rather: The like we have in the entrance of this Epiſtle, For this is our rejoycing, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in all ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity, and not in fleſhly wiſdome, but in the grace of God we have had our converſation in the world, and more eſpecially towards you, *q. d.* elſe you might ſuſpect us. So in the firſt Epiſtle, When I came unto you, I came not with the excellency of ſpeech, or of wiſdome: But my preaching was in the demonſtration of ſpirit, *q. d.* therefore you have cauſe to receive it. Saint *Peter* likewiſe, Feed the flocke of God which is among you, overſeeing it, not by conſtraint, or for filthy lucre ſake, but of a ready minde.

2 Cor. 11. 7.

2 Cor. 1. 12.

1 Cor. 2. 1, 2.

1 Pet. 5. 2.

Other Texts will offer themſelves by occaſion: One thing I will add occaſioned by my Text, and that is, That as inſincere and ſelfe-ſeeking ends are alway ſinfull, ſo even the abridging of our ſelves of ſome of that lawfull liberty (which a Miniſter or other publicke perſon might otherwiſe uſe) is meet and requiſite, ſo oft as we have to deal with weake ones and ſilly novices, who are not yet ſtrong enough to digeſt our priviledge, but rather to ſtumble at us, and ſo turne all our counſell and labours to meer unprofitablenes. To covet other mens eſteem or wealth, is ſimply evill: But as the caſe may ſtand, it is not meet to urge the uttermoſt of our due, when thereby our Miniſtery lyes upon hazard: But ſo pretious ought ſoules to be, and the preſerving of the honour of our perſons and labours, (eſpecially ſince there will ever be weake ones and ignorant, till they ſee their folly by wiſer experience) that even ſometimes we muſt remit of our dues, that ſo wee may ſcrue into the mindes of men the more perſwaſively: Which I ſpeake not to diſanull the Miniſters right, or the right of ſucceſſion, when his dues are injuriouſly detained by thoſe that are baſely minded and fraudulent: But according as a wiſe mans judgement would in ſuch caſes think meet for a time to avoid greater perill: And ſo was it in the caſe of *Paul*, and in thoſe primitive times: And not unlike to it was the caſe of *Naaman* here, whom the Prophet durſt not in any wiſe offend, but aiming at the honour and eſteem of God and his worſhip, that it might be kept entire, would not ſo much as come out before, nor after this cure effected, accept either more or leſſe at his hands, though otherwiſe Prophets accepted poore preſents from men, as appeares, 1 Sam. 9. 8. being the meanes of their ordinary ſupport allowed them by God. But from Proofes, I come to a few Reaſons.

Miniſters who will purchaſe intereſt in others, muſt forfeit ſome of their own.

First, that deſerves juſtly to be effectuall which is from God. No argument ſo much perſwades & convinces as that which is divine. Witneſſe heathen *Laban* in point of the marriage of *Rebecca*, what can wee ſay? Neither good nor bad, but that is from God, and therefore muſt

1. *Reaſon.*

Gen. 24. 50.

2 Kings

take effect: Witneſſe *Gamaliel*, Looke to your ſelves (ſaith he) what ye doe againſt theſe men, for if they be not of God, they will fall of themſelves; but if from him you doe but in vaine to fight againſt God. Now marke, That counſell which ſeekes not it ſelfe, but the good of the party counſelled, comes neareſt to the point of divineneſſe. For why? What is more like to be from God then that which is for God? And what is more like to be for God, then that which leaſt ſavours of ſelf-love and ſelfe-ends? Partly in reſpect of the nature of it, becauſe nothing doth more reſemble Gods excellency then Pureneſſe & Sincerity: And partly, becauſe uſually nothing doth ſo much hinder and foreſtall Gods glory and ends, then ſeeking our own: look one place or two, in which both theſe are put together, as making to one and the ſame purpoſe. Saint *Peter* preſſing the Jewes to beleeve his Epiſtle, uſeth this argument, Becauſe (ſaith he) we ſpeake without all diſſimulation and cunning deceit: But how doth he prove this? Surely by this reaſon, becauſe he preached no other doctrine then that which had been taught him by his Maſter, We have not followed cunningly deviſed fables, but that of which we our ſelves were ey-witneſſes, for Chriſt had it of the Father, and we had it of him. Marke how he fetcheth the ſincerity of his writings from the divine authority by which he ſpake. If then Divineneſſe be ſo ſtrong a reaſon to perſwade our ſincerity, much more ought ſincerity to prevaile and perſwade them whom we deale with. And the reaſon is, becauſe many may poſſibly plead truthes as from God, who yet plead them not in a due manner, that is ſincerely, as wee know that many preach Chriſt of envy: But when both goe together, that is, ſincere truth, and truth ſincerely handled, what can be ſo powerfull? Saint *Paul* puts both together in the place forequoted, We walked not in craftineſſe, but by manifeſtation of truth and the word of God: How? Commending our ſelves to each mans conſcience as in the ſight of God.

Acts 5.

1 Pet. 1.16.17.

2 Cor. 4.2.

Briefly then, the firſt Reaſon ſtands thus, Sincere counſell deſerves acceptance, becauſe it cannot but be from God, and ſo carries with it the force of a divine perſwaſion which muſt needs work more with the conſcience then any thing of our owne, be it never ſo powerfull.

2. *Reaſon.* The ſecond argument of the point, That ſincere counſell deſerves acceptance, is from the nature of Sincerity: There is nothing in the nature of it which hath more efficacy. Now that which is in it ſelfe moſt effectuall, ought to winne accordingly ground in the minde of them whom it concernes. This may eaſily appeare by the contrary: Nothing is ſo diſſwaſive as counſell when it appeares to come from falſhood, and mixture of our owne ends with the truth we utter. See it in 1 King. 22. When all thoſe flattering *Baals* Prieſts brought in their verdict to *Ahab* very plauſibly, *Iehoſhaphat* ſmelling their pretence to pleaſe *Ahab*, could not reſt quiet, but asked, is not here a Prophet of the Lord to enquire of? None but a perverted man by his blinding ſelf-love would hearken to them, becauſe he beleeved that which he deſired. Therefore on the contrary, ſincerity muſt needs carry with it the powerfull perſwaſion of all other: Now if ſo, then ought it to take moſt place with men whom it concernes. What did ſo carry the ſilly ignorant multitude in the

the darkeneſſe of Popery, after the perſons and devotions of the Regulars, Fryers and Monkes, from the counſel and miniſtery of their Secular Prieſts? Oh the wonderfull opinion of their ſincerity and ſanctity of life and doctrine, and the apparant baſeneſſe and rottenneſſe of the Secular Clergy! Not that the one was one whit holier then the other (neither barrell better herring) but ſo it was, that the one lived in their Cells and Cloyſters, wherein all their villany was covered from the ſight of men; they blinded the people by their coorſe fare, apparell, poverty, and counterfeit ſincerity, being double iniquity: the other ſinnes brake out more openly in the ſight of the world, and made them moſt odious: and ſo did the other after the light had diſcovered it, for then all men ſaw them ſo much the more vile, by how much they had lurked and lyen hid ſo long under their covert of ſhame. To end the Reaſon. Except men bee mad and beſotted, thoſe Arguments ſhall prevaile moſt with them which are in themſelves moſt effectuall, not thoſe which ſavor of the contrary, to wit, falſhood and diſſimulation.

3. *Reaſon.* And thirdly, ſutable to the nature of ſincerity and falſhood, is the nature of man, to whom ſincerity or falſhood is applyed. Take it thus, We doe by nature marveilouſly diſtaſte all truth, whether it concerne the ſhunning of evill, or the doing of good. But let it but appeare to ſuch perſons that thoſe who perſwade them to the one or from the other, that they doe it for any other ends ſave Gods, they are thereby more ready to catch at ſomewhat which may ſtrengthen them in their naturall oppoſition to good, or inclination to evill: And by this they are ſtrengthened in their courſe. But if this their cõlour be waſht off, and that it appeare that they are ſincerely counſelled from God, then either it ſecretly drawes the heart to embrace it, or if not, yet it ſtoppes the mouth from all ſhuffling and juſt cavill againſt it. And this is a great matter. So naturally doth ſincerity prevaile with the ſpirit of ſuch as are not ſoked and ſapped in their ſinne, willing to be gulled (nay to gull their owne conſcience) that although it doe not for the preſent convince, yet afterward it prevailes: when the ſeed under the dry clod is moyſtned by ſome ſhowre of affliction, or worke of conſcience; and put caſe it never ſhould, as we ſee *Davids* could not with *Saul* (ſave for the preſent) yet will it (and that juſtly) leave ſuch an one altogether inexcuſable. The iſſue is, therefore they are monſters in kinde whom ſincere counſell perſwades not at all, nay enrages them the more both againſt counſell and counſellor.

4. *Reaſon.* Fourthly and eſpecially, therefore ſuch counſell deſerves to prevaile, becauſe it outſhootes carnall reaſon in her owne bow; they who out of the ſincerity of their ſpirit ſtrive to give counſell to others, doe in a ſort beare downe their carnall reaſon by the practice of ſelfe-deniall. Now what is more ſtrong to beat that downe which moſt reſiſts gracious counſell, then when he that gives counſell reads a lecture to another of that which himſelf hath firſt practiſed? True it is, if Gods matters might bear ſway with men according to their worth, as the perſwading men to beleeve, repent and be ſaved: What ſhould need to be laid in the ballance with them to enforce obedience? But now the queſtion

2 Kings

is not ſo much touching the things themſelves, or the divine grounds whereupon they infallably reſt, no nor the aſſured profit which they carry to the receivers. Theſe all are undoubted; but alas! That which muſt be looked at, is the diſproportion and uncapableneſſe of the receiver, blinded with prejudice, foreſtalled by error, ill cuſtome, infidelity, ſenſuality: In theſe reſpects, Gods counſells unto fleſh and bloud are as the Camel, or a Cable to a needles eye, ſo that there muſt bee collaterall and by-waies uſed to draw ſuch. Hence came *Iohn Baptiſt*, the Lord Jeſus, the Apoſtles of Chriſt, with ſo ſtrange ſpirits, not only of gifts, but of ſelf-deniall, of humility, of ſincerity, and ſuch other gifts of attraction and perſwaſion to beleeve thoſe divine truths they urged: All that heard them perceived that they ſought not a Kingdome to themſelves, but made way for God, Truth and Heaven; the diet, the apparell of *Iohn*, the lowlineſſe of Chriſt, that he had not ſo much as a bird or a fox, neſt or hole of the earth to hide himſelf in, the Apoſtles kept no money in their girdles, but had their labour for their paines: this countermined carnall ſenſe in her owne element, and gave unſpeakeable evidence to the counſells, they gave that they were to be followed, becauſe they practiſed what they ſpake, and ſo convinced the very ſenſe of the hearer, and let in (as a needle the thred) the light and life of truth into the ſoule by beating downe that which reſiſted: elſe had it been eaſie for men to reply, Tuſh theſe men ſeek themſelves, but now your mouth is ſtopped. And theſe Reaſons may ſuffice.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction. Judgement of controverſall truthes muſt be chiefly aſcribed to the moſt ſincere counſellors.

To proceed to ſome Uſe. The firſt may be of Inſtruction, To wit, what courſe is to be taken about the ſetling of caſes controverſall, either for doctrine or practiſe, when there is endleſſe contention in the Church about them, and when the Scriptures yeeld not ſo punctuall aſſent, or at leaſt their verduict is depraved and miſtaken by men of contrary mindes. Surely in ſuch caſes let their counſell bee taken, who out of queſtion were men of moſt ſincere and incorrupt practiſe, ſuch as were farre from ſeeking their owne ends, honour, repute, wealth or welfare, theſe may be thought to bee the moſt entire witneſſes to the truth, becauſe they had the leaſt corrupt affections to bribe and defile their judgement; they were the cleaneſt boxes and ſweeteſt veſſels to preſerve the truth of God in, without weof or tang of their owne; look what came from *Iohn*, Chriſt or his Apoſtles, is moſt unqueſtionably beſt counſell; if there be any expreſſe text of Scripture extant about it, we may buy and ſell upon their counſell, becauſe moſt ſincere: If there be not (as it is to be noted that in ſome caſes there be not, that God might try our honeſty) then in the next place conſult with the practiſe of ſuch as lived next them in the moſt incorrupt ages and prime dayes of the Church, when truth was as a chryſtall ſtreame which might bee ſeen to the bottome. Read the writings of them who lived not only in times of proſperity and glory three hundred or foure hundred yeares after Chriſt, but in thoſe times of purity and ſincerity, when as yet truth had received no mixtures, no defilements, by the pompe, the exceſſe of them who lived in them. Enquire of the dayes of old, when men were hunted, perſecuted, martyred for the cauſe of Chriſt: They to whom truth was dearer then their lives, who were farre from ſeeking

Who theſe are, and how to be tried.

great

great things for themſelves, but carryed their lives in their boſomes to be let out with their life bloud for Chriſt. I deny not but they are much to be reputed who have lived ſince, but with difference, the more arguments there be for their ſincerity, the more they deſerve credit, the more they ſuffered, loſt or forwent, or ſtill are ready to loſe & forgo for him, when they need not the more (ordinarily) they are to be truſted, except juſt reaſon may be alledged againſt them, to wit, that their ſelf-deniall is contrary to the word, as Popiſh martyrs & the like: Look how they preacht, look what tenets they held concerning the aptneſſe of men for the Miniſtry, look what manners they were of, what contempt of the world, of faſhions, of carnall pompe, look what they judged fitteſt for the calling of Miniſters, the pure adminſtration of ſacraments, prayer in the aſſemblies, collection for the poor, cenſures of offendors, admonition of the unruly, frequency of preaching, that let us take counſell from them in: If they kept the Lords day onely as an humane ordinance, by the Apoſtles appointment arbitrary, and Eccleſiaſtically conſtituted, or as the Lord Jeſus his Agents from divine inſtinct, and as a day perpetually to be obſerved for the honour of our perfected redemption, then let us doe ſo: looke what *Paul* hath thought of free-will, of election, of rejection, of the free grace of God, and ſo thoſe worthies who followed: looke what thoſe Martyrs ancient or moderne, thought of juſtification, whether by workes or faith, of Purgatory, the Maſſe, or the adoring of Saints and Images, that let us cleave too, for they wanted thoſe blindeings of eies which others had, (though honour muſt be given to ſome without prejudice to any) and the reaſon is my Doctrine: Sincerity in the counſeller deſerves that their counſell be regarded. And the like rule holds ſtill good, that thoſe to whom truths are more pretious then goods, lives, liberties, or ends, other things ſutable, are to be preferred in point of advice and conſcience, then thoſe who are ſhort of them in ſelfe-deniall, becauſe the more of Selfe abides, the leſſe Sincerity.

Popiſh Martyrs againſt the Scripture, not to be regarded.

Secondly, it may be a caveat unto us in our judgements, touching them whom God hath ſet a marke of exception upon, why their counſell ought in no wiſe to be followed, whether Writers, Preachers or Profeſſors: To wit, ſuch as have in all their courſes bewraid themſelves to be flatterers, timeſervers, and ſeekers of their owne ends, ſetters up of themſelves with the pulling downe of Chriſt and his Goſpel. And they are firſt of all, the nation of Papiſts, contrary to *John Baptiſt*, whoſe ſaying was, I muſt decreaſe, but he muſt encreaſe: But theſe contrarily: we muſt grow and encreaſe, decreaſe who ſo will. Tell me, what one thing belonging to their Kingdomes ſavors of ſincerity, from the crowne of the Miter to the foote? Nay, what was not firſt grounded in counterfeit humility to catch ſilly ſoules, and to ſtrip them both of their bodily welfare and ſalvation? Even as the Ivy creeps out of the earth upon the ſilly ſtocke of the tree, but never lins till it have overtopped it, and ſuckt out the ſap and ſo deſtroied it: Sure if onely ſincerity plead for audience, then may all good Chriſtians ſay of them, their doctrine, their lives, their miracles, traditions, ceremonies, ſacraments, Prieſts, preachings, prayers: Into their counſell let not my ſoule come! Their ſcopes are carnall to ſet up their owne pompe, eaſe, belly-cheere

Vſe 2. Caveat how to judge of meet or unmeet Counſellors.

Joh. 3. 30.

Popiſh falſhood in all their waye in particulars.

Gen. 49. 6.

2 Kings

cheere, to deſtroy the doctrine of faith, true ſelfe-deniall and mortification. Under the pretext of chaſtity, of poverty, of faſting, pennance, confeſſion, ſacraments, what have they done, but lived in odious uncleanneſſe, raked the treaſures of whole Kingdomes into their Cells, devoured whole houſes of their votaries, puft up themſelves in the opinion of more righteouſneſſe then the Law exacts, dived into the ſecrets of Princes, hidden moſt cruell murthers of lawfull Kings, and enhanſed themſelves to ſuch a pompe & ſtate, as made the whole Chriſtian world groane under their tyranny: Is it like that ſuch ſhould ever bring home ſoules to God, whoſe onely ſtudy is to bring ſacks to their Popes mill. As he once ſaid of the Turkes horſe, that where he came no more graſſe grew: So I may ſay of them, ſo farre are they from ſincerity in ſeeking mens ſalvation and Gods glory, that they waſte and blaſt all and every branch and bloſſome that tends that way. Nay their moſt ſeeming holy devotions, what ſerve they for but to fulfill the fleſh, to puffe up the heart with a conceit of her owne goodneſſe? Their counſells of perfection, what tend they unto but to pride them in a thought of greater righteouſneſſe then God commands? Their excommunications and cenſures, to what end doe they aime, ſave to live upon the ſinnes of the people, to picke their purſes, and ſpoile their ſoules? Who ever by any of their counſells grew more chaſte, devoute or temperate, and not rather deſperate, as knowing that money will anſwer all? And when they write books, what intend they, but to flatter their Idoll the Pope, and tell him, although he draw milions of ſouls to hell, yet may no man aske him, what doſt thou? The travells of thoſe Jeſuits attending the Spaniſh armies into the Eaſt-Indies, what ſcope had they? Surely in ſhew for enlarging the religion of the Pope, but in effect the murthering of infinite thouſands ſavages, and that contrary to oaths & vows, that ſo they might fill their purſes with their treaſures and hoards of gold, till they made all Religion ſtinke in the noſtrills of ſuch as they pretended to convert. *Luther* after all his experience of their Religion, profeſſed it to be the cutthroate of the ſoule, and the leaver thereof, at the brinke of deſpaire. Doe not their attires, fares, attendance, Temples, exceed all the wealth of Princes, their treaſures are outward bravery? Are ſuch like to ſave ſouls? Thoſe Monks which were ſent for to wait upon *Auſtin* (the Apoſtle as they ſtile him of England) found him mounted upon a throne, and thence dictating his new lawes and devices, and therefore abhorred his counſell: Even ſo let us doe, and let all their nation, head and taile, branch and ruſh, bee abhorred by us to the pit of hell; for thoſe who give not lawes, counſell and rules, out of ſincerity, but for the ſetting up of the fleſh, and deſtroying the Kingdome of Chriſt, deſerve no allowance, neither they, nor ſuch as tread in their ſteps. So much for this Uſe.

Vſe 3. Admonition. Magiſtrates, Miniſters, all Superiours, be ſincere in their cenſures.

Thirdly, let this point afford Admonition to all ſuch as are in the place of Counſellors, Admoniſhers, Cenſurers and Governours of others, whether Magiſtrates or Miniſters, or Officers of Courts, or others in authority. Is it ſo? Can onely ſuch counſell and inſtruction, claime regard and obedience, as comes from ſimplicity and deniall of our owne ends? Is all other counſell unſavory, unpowerfull and ridiculous?

culous? In the feare of God, then conſider your places, remember that the eyes of men are upon you, they looke for uprightneſſe and conſcience in you; if they finde judgement and equity turned into the wormwood and gall of your owne reſpects, they will ſcorne their counſells and warning, your ſelves have loſt your honour, and your counſell is as ſalt which hath loſt her ſavor. Ye Magiſtrates firſt, remember that you execute not onely the judgements of the King but of God, to him you are to give account; abhorre covetouſneſſe, bribes, gifts, bee not perverted hereby: Let righteouſneſſe blinde your eye from all flattery, feare and falſhood: Let not theſe blinde the eye of juſtice and counſell. Favour not the wicked, pinch not the innocent, turne the edge of your ſword againſt the vile, and the backe of it to the weldeſerving, doe not beare it in vaine, as undoubtedly you ſhall, if once yee be found unfaithfull in your places: Doe not for baſe reſpects beare downe a good cauſe, nor ſpeake not booty for a bad: If inferior officers complaine and crave counſell and aſſiſtance againſt drunkards, Sabbath breakers and diſordered ones, ſwearers, lewd companions; beware leſt a falſe heart, ſavouring ſinne and diſtaſting goodneſſe, cauſe ye to ſhuffle and conceale your owne power and authority in beating down ſin, be impartiall: Say not falſely you want law, & you ſhould do more then you can anſwer, and you muſt have good cards to ſhew, this argues inſincerity: Doe not call the delinquents and talke a few cold words of reproofe to them, when both they and you know they deſerve greater cenſure, ſuch counſell will never prevaile, it ſtinkes, it hath a dead flye of falſhood in it. Will your admonitions prevaile when they bewray ſuch baſeneſſe? No, no: ye ſtrengthen the hands of ſinners, fleſh them againſt good officers, diſmay the good, and bolſter ſinne; for why, what doe men ſay of you? Tuſh as for ſuch Juſtices, they maintaine Alehouſes and diſorder in their owne ſervants and Tenants, and for a baſe bribe, will advance thoſe ſins which they ſit in place to put downe: What are you then but painted walls under which a world of rottenneſſe lurkes?

So alſo you Officers (for I ſee this day ſome of all ſorts to heare me) who ſit in Eccleſiaſticall ſeats, and profeſſe to aime at Evangelicall correction and cenſure, looke to your ſelves; make not a mart of the uncleanneſſe and diſorderly courſes of men, let it not appeare that a little money can blunt the edge of excommunication, or admonition, let not men finde you out to be takers of gifts to pervert the way of Gods cenſures, doe not openly raile againſt ſinne, but after (for an underhand bribe) diſcharge an adulterer or other ſinner; this doth but caſt oile in the flame, encreaſe ſinne, enrage the offender; for why, he thinkes of it according to the eaſie price he payes, and what will not a man give to buy off ſhame and puniſhment? No, no, if you will prevaile, maintaine the authority of Officers, if ye be from God, be for him, and let ſincerity arme your cenſures and counſells; ſo that men may tremble and feare that great thunderbolt, and ſinne no more: elſe they will eſteeme you and your counſell no more then men will doe a cracke of thunder, which when its paſt is forgotten, and they will goe to their trade more freſh then ever. So you the ſacred Miniſters of God, in whom above all

Amos 5.7. & 6.12.

2 Chron. 19. 6.

Prov. 17. 23.

Rom. 13. 4.

Eccleſ. 10. 1.

Act. 23. 3. Eccleſiaſticall Officers.

Act. 5. 7. 8.

Miniſters.

2Kings

all the wiſdome and counſell of God ſhould dwell: who ſhould be as *Iob* deſcribes himſelfe, honourable and reverend, terrible as banners; ſuch as both young and old ſhould riſe up unto, hide themſelves, and lay their hands to their mouth: Bee you exhorted to ſincerity if you would preſerve the honour of your perſons, places and labours, and not be made as unſavoury ſalt, trodden under feet of men. Above all, the Divell labours to make your counſells unprofitable, becauſe thereby hee brings mens ſoules to perdition. If your carriage be ſeaſoned with gravity, pureneſſe, ſelfe-denial, men will honour you, and your counſells ſhall beare ſway where no power of man can reach, even in the conſciences of men: But if once they have the meaſure of your foote, that any baſe luſt defile your ſpirits, it will preſently make all that comes from you vile and contemptible: Oh brethren, conſider many things will pollute us! One thing onely can make us and our counſells ſavoury, and that is ſelfe-deniall and ſincerity. If men perceive us to be leavened with the vice of ſenſuality, gaming, pleaſures, company, Alehouſe and boone companionſhip, and yet perhaps on the Lords day lay load upon other ſinners: what will they doe but laugh in their ſleeves, and ſay, Phyſitian heale thy ſelfe, and then I will take thy phyſicke.

Job 29.22.

Luke 5.

If they ſee us ſet another way to domineer over them as the beſt men of the Pariſh, to maintaine a great ſtomacke and bring them under our girdles, to ſtoope to us and know who we are; they will but ſcorne us, and tell us Chriſt and his Apoſtles were humble and meeke, and ſought to be great in the conſcience, not lord it over mens perſons: If they ſhall ſpy in us a jollity and pride of life in our fare, apparell or courſe, that all is little enough to maintaine our ſelves, and our wives and children in the faſhions of the world, at the higheſt pitch, though we borrow, runne into debt, and beg: Alas! what will they doe? They will ſlight all our words, diſdaine our counſells, and ſay, theſe men have forſaken their fatneſſe and ſweetneſſe, by which they cheerd the heart of God and man, and all to exalt themſelves above the trees like brambles: If they perceive all our bent and ſtreame to runne after honours, dignities, benefices or preferments, in the meane while, ſuffering the people to runne riot, and to goe to havocke, leaving them to hirelings and Idolls at our pleaſure: If they ſee that we are all for gold and gaine, little caring for a flocke, ſave for the fleece, raking all from them to fill our purſes and coffers, and letting their ſoules goe to hell: I pray tell me, will they care for our preachings or counſells? If wee ſhall now and then come in with a quaint Sermon or two, and ſpeake like Angels, ſhall our counſell prevaile? When they ſee our lives, will they heare our words? Shall not ſome poore ſimple Preacher, far inferiour to us in learning or parts, ſway more with the conſcience, then a thouſand ſuch as we? Ceaſe therefore our owne baſe ends, doe not fret againſt them who are above us in honeſty, but equall them in ſincerity, and then wee, our gifts and counſells, ſhall beginne to perſwade, and as a needle, draw the thred of conviction after them. Feed we the flocke of Chriſt not of conſtraint, for baſe lucre, or our owne ends, but of a ready minde, and then the worke will ſucceed and proſper. The like I may ſay to ſuch as (when occaſion ſerves) are employed in weighty matters of Church & Common-

Judg.9.

1 Pet.5.4.

Parliament men and Patriots.

Common-wealth: I am perſwaded there be many good Patriots in this Land who wiſh well to the publicke good; but what is that which hath hitherto hindred? They ſay there is a fiſh (called therefore *Echeneis*) which will take hold of a ſhip and ſtop the paſſage of it: And there is a weed (whins I thinke) which will cauſe the plow (which rends up moſt weeds) to ſtand ſtill: and I thinke no leſſe but that this ſelfe-love is the fiſh and weed which hath thus long in ſecret prejudiced the effect of our Parliaments, where Sages ſit to conſult, but they have not caſt out this Davus (as I may call it) which diſturbs all: ſuch and ſuch abuſes I could reforme (thinkes one) and ſeeke to reduce impropriations to the right of the Church, but then I muſt reſtore many my ſelf, and that will pinch: Such Lawes I could wiſh, but then perhaps I ſhould be the firſt that ſhould ſuffer: If ſuch a Miniſter were in my Pariſh as made conſcience, he would ſpy out my baſe wayes, and reprove them, and then I ſhould be noted, and ſo it were better to live under a worſe, that I may ſtill ſleepe in a whole skin: The truth is, this ſelfe-love is the canker which ruines States and Common-wealths; whiles each man lookes at the conſequence of good Lawes, not at their goodneſſe; what hurt will redound to my name and ſtate, not what good may accrew to the publicke.

Simil.

And hence it is, that although for their owne liberties, and the outward welfare of the ſubject, each one is ready to ſtrike in, yet for thoſe things which concerne the honour of God, the welfare of his Goſpell, and purging out abuſes, they are fearefull to medle: Oh, they feare they ſhall hereby bring their names in queſtion, and thus private ends croſſe the publicke! Oh, if men in authority had ſincerity ſutable, the North winde doth not ſo drive away raine, as they might ſuppreſſe ſin! And when inferiours perceive the honeſt bent of governours to make and execute Lawes, neither turning to the right hand nor the left, neither looking at flattery, feare or fooliſh pitty! Oh how would they quaile and tremble! If in our Townes and families it were thus, that Headborrowes would conſult and governe according to this rule, not looking at their owne ends a ſquint, but with a ſingle eye, what might not be done? Whereas the moſt like well a good order, and puniſhing of the unruly in generall, till it come to my ſonne, daughter, ſervant, tenant or kinſman, and then they have the diſeaſe in the noſe, called touch me not, then their wine is water, and their ſilver tin, and their zeale turnes to aſhes. Others love and like order, but they will not ſtir themſelves, they love to ſpare their travell, their purſes, or the note of others; they love eaſe, and thereby ſinne goes unpuniſhed, or fooliſh pitty marres the City, and ſinne growes ſo rife by cuſtome, that its paſt remedy.

To conclude, if husbands would ſincerely counſell their wives, without ſelfe reſpects, and parents their children, and Maſters their ſervants, what houſholds ſhould we have? But when husbands are affraid to diſtaſte their wives and chuſe rather to endure ill faſhions, the loſſe of the worſhip of God in family, then diſpleaſure of their wives; parents chuſe rather to lay the bridle on their childrens neckes, then to croſſe them, (ſeeking their owne eaſe with their ruine, as *Ely* and *David* did)

Husbands and Parents.

and

2Kings

and Maſters care not how ſervants ſpend the Sabbath or carry themſelves, ſo their worke goe forward: how ſhould it be choſen, but God and Religion muſt be caſt out of the family? So much ſhall ſerve for Admonition.

Vſe 4. Exhortation to ſincerity in Counſell.

Next whereto, as I conceive, Exhortation may be added: That as I have warn'd them againſt baſe reſpects, ſo I might perſwade all ſorts (and eſpecially ſuch as whoſe counſell amounts to the greateſt good, or deepeſt evill) to ſincerity and faithfulneſſe. And once againe (my brethren Miniſters) conſider, you ſhall never be able to convince by the ſincerity of truth and the word, till you adde ſincerity of conſcience and intention of the peoples good. Evidence of truth from God, and evidence of ſincerity for God, muſt (as *Aaron* and *Hur*) alway prop up your Miniſtery on both ſides, (as *Moſes* arme) from flagging. Miniſters doe not alway prevaile when they doe thus, but never when they doe otherwiſe. Excellent was that ſpeech of *Paul* to *Agrippa*, Oh I deſire that thou wert not almoſt, but altogether as I am, excepting my bands. He wiſhes him well with integrity of love: So thou wert a through Chriſtian, let the chaine reſt upon me, I ſeek thy ſoul, no eaſe to my ſelf. I know there be many of us who have ſhot thoſe gulfes which I ſpake of in the Uſe before: And I know that we would (many of us) abhor to crooke the rule of Truth, to flatter others in their lewdneſſe and ſinne for our owne bellies, hopes, or purpoſes; and to hold correſpondence with our betters by corrupt conſciences. I know we dare not (to curry favour, and ſhunne the opinion of ſingularity) ſow pillowes under mens elbows, & cry peace, peace in their ears againſt the word, which were to put out theirs and their owne eyes both, that both leader and led might fall into the pit. But yet there is even in us another dreg of Selfe to bee purged out. We are men of paſſion (as *Elia* was) and when the Divell ſees that we will cloſe with our calling & be painfull, or that we will not eaſily be ſeduced to open ambition, epicuriſme, company, pleaſures and covetouſneſſe, (all which nouriſh falſe ends) then he hath another bait for us: That we may couch Selfe under our beſt reproofes, and ſometime pitch upon them with uncharitable affections, revenge of ſuch as we diſtaſte, too good conceit of ſuch as we affect, or adde ſome bitter gourd or other of our owne to mar the pottage. Thus did *Moſes* being willed to ſpeake to the rocke, he would adde of his owne, and ſmote it, that the people might ſee their ſinne, but it coſt him deare, and did no good: So hard a taske it is for fleſh to trade in Gods matters with Gods minde, entirely and ſincerely; if the meekeſt man was ſo, what are we prone unto? And yet how may this dreg of ours hurt the receit, even as if we made no conſcience at all? Brethren every mans temptations lye within his owne element. Perhaps we are faithfull and diligent preachers, but our livings are not to our mindes, we thinke our ſelves not regarded to our deſerts, here ſteps in our owne ſpirit and mixes it ſelfe unlawfully with a thing lawfull: Its meet we were well requited: But ſay we come ſhort (we are never knowne while we be tryed) where then is our ſincerity in doing our worke, for the workes ſake, and truſting our Maſter for wages who hath ſet us on worke? How doe mutterings and murmurings break in upon us, with complaints, diſcontents

Act. 26. 27.

Matth. 23. 4 Jam. ult.

Numb. 20. 11.

tents and unwillingneſſe to proceed? How doth the unthankfulneſſe of people encroach upon our ſpirits to breed diſtruſt and impatience, which rather ſhould excite and improve our faith to the uttermoſt? And this is ſo farre from healing our ſore, that it rather incenſes it more, and weakens both the opinion of our labours, and the ſupply of our wants in the mindes and practices of our hearers, who thinke thus of us to be (not as we are, but as we ſhould be) men void of ſelf-love, and full of ſincerity for the true ends of God and their ſoules. Now (brethren) what peace can we have within, while we are carnall in miniſtring of the ſpirituall things of God, or vend his wares upon our owne ſtall, fleecing the Lord of his deareſt jewell, his glory, and making him a ſtalking horſe for our owne game? The baſe ends of other profeſſions, as Phyſitians, Lawyers, Tradeſmen, is not of ſo deep a dye as ours, becauſe the ground we ſtand on, and the Trade we drive is holy and divine, theirs only civill and worldly. But how (will ſome ſay) may this grace be gotten? I will give two or three directions, and two or three motives, and finiſh the Uſe.

Queſt.

Anſw.

1. Rules for ſincerity in Miniſtery and Counſell.

Firſt, addict we our ſelves with delight, to attend upon reading, ſtudy, converſe with one another, imparting our needs and aides in the ordinances each to other, as immediately ſerving to breed and feed this grace and to weane us from the contrary; refuſing not onely the uſuall pleaſures, profits and vanities of the world, (except meet and private recreations) but even denying our owne curioſity, in ſtudies and abuſe of gifts to oſtentation, or to vent our owne way of quotations and conceits: Doe not ſhew your tooles, but your workemanſhip, and that you are workemen that need not be aſhamed, dividing the word aright, not ſeeking your ſelves but the end of your labours, men thinke if they have once got them a name, they are made for ever. But let us not looke at the carnall cuſtome of the times, but at that which may breed ſincerity in us. God may be ſerved with the beſt of our gifts, ſo that we firſt reſigne up our ſelves and them to him, & ſo take them back againe refined and purged, waſhed and pared and ſhaven for his owne ſervice. When God hath ſtampt them with his owne Image and Spirit, there is uſe of them all. If ordinary meanes will not ſerve, let extraordinary be uſed: obſerve what ſpeciall tang of ſelfe-love doth moſt aſſault us, every man is not alike tempted; ſome itch after one impure end, ſome another, ſloth and eaſe, bearing ſway, pride of life, gaine, pleaſures, or as the humour lyes. Doe but conſider what excellent lights have waxen dimme, yea gone out as a ſnuffe by one of theſe, *Demas*, *Diotrephes*, *Alexander*, many in our owne experience. If there be not ſincerity in our preaching-ſcope, it is a ſhrewd preſumption, there is but little in any reſpect, and then what may not befall us? I have noted ſome in this kinde, who by degrees have wanzed and betraied themſelves to be but unfaithfull in the maine, and for their ends have forſaken the cauſe of Chriſt altogether.

2.

3.

4.

Conſider how little good is done at the beſt, when we are moſt ſincere: But as for the other, how little or no good appeares to be done in the places where they reſide. Who knowes (in ſuch a world as this, ſo full of timeſervers, ſo full of temptations, baites, feares) how great need we

1. Some motives to ſincerity in Counſell.

2.

2Kings

we have of prayer, of armour and watching, leſt he that thinks he ſtands, yet fall before he be aware? How many are our ſnares on every ſide, either by the flattery of ſuch as applaud us, or the unthankefulneſſe of ſuch as forſake us, or the ignorance of ſuch as will not acknowledge us, or the wrongs of ſuch as provoke us, the unprofitableneſſe of our hearers, the couſenage of Satan, or the falſhood of our owne hearts? How
3. many in diſcontent have turned Papiſts, Pelagians, Anabaptiſts, Socinians, and never come to a pitch till death have ended their ambitious dayes? How will hard times, the multitude of expences, the example of others our inferiours, exceeding us in preferments, tickle us to forſake ſincerity, exept God have put a ſweetneſſe into us of working for himſelfe and conſcience, and truſting him for ſucceſſe? It muſt be our whole worke even to locke our ſelves, wives and poſterity into the arke of providence, and the promiſe of alſufficiency; knowing that (except we be ſuch as can ſwallow any gobbets) we ſhall not by all our carking, adde one cubit, or make one haire white or blacke: one promiſe beleeved will prove a ſurer ſtocke then all our ſelfe-love and ſelfe-ſeeking
4. will profit us, not to ſpeake of an ill conſcience beſides. Let us beare this minde, that whatſoever our meanes be for our labours, yet rather then we would not honour God in them if we might, and the caſe ſo required, we would truſt him for ſupport and ſupply.

To conclude, oft muſe of the price of ſoules. It is *Peters* argument, when he urges Miniſters to preach of a ready minde, not for gaine, becauſe the flocke of Chriſt is bought with his bloud. And to conclude with that which he there addeth, That hundred fold which wee ſhall reap for all our loſſes in and for the cauſe of God and ſincerity will fully requite us; if here we loſe our skinne and fleece by wolves and dogs, which purſue and teare us: the great Shepheard of the flocke our Lord Jeſus ſhall come, we ſhall have a Crowne of glory that fades not, better then all that we can expect, or men can gratifie us with. Thus much alſo for Exhortation may ſerve the turne.

Vſe 5. Terror to all proud deſpiſers of ſincere Counſell.

Nextly, here is Terror and Reproofe for all that live under convincing, ſincere and faithfull counſell, yea ſuch as they cannot except againſt, to proceed from unfaigned deſire of their ſalvation, converſion and repentance, and yet ſtill live in a ſtout and wilfull obſtinacy and reſolution, to abide in their luſts and liberties without controll. This is ſure, while men can pretend any ſiniſter end in the Miniſter, they thinke themſelves to have buckler enough to beare off all blowes. But even to you, this I ſay, that it ſhall not ſerve your turne to caſt this blame upon your Miniſter; for the power of the word ought more to convince you, and ſcare you from your baſe courſes, then the Miniſters inſincerity to excuſe you. But when all this your plea is gone and cut off, and you cannot deny, but the evidence of the word goeth with the evidence of ſincerity, and you cannot for your eares deny but that your ſoules and ſelves have beene ſought with the denying of our owne health, gaine, nay, that you have had ſome Miniſters who have robb'd themſelves to teach you, denyed many ſuccours for your ſake, and been at their owne coſt to ſtudy and preach unto you, and yet the day is to come, that one of many of you are wonne from your blindeneſſe, A-

theiſme,

theiſme, infidelity, hollowneſſe, pride, worldlineſſe, or the like: Oh what anſwer ſhall you make to the Lord when hee ſhall load you with this accuſation! *Saul* himſelfe in a pang, relented at *Davids* ſimplicity of heart in cutting off the lap, when he might have cut his throat: but ſuch confeſſion was yet never extorted from ſome of you; I will not make all alike in this kinde, God forbid: But I wiſh all to looke about them. Some are ſo curſed as thoſe hearers of Chriſt, who when he by the finger of God caſt out Divells, yet enraged their hearts even againſt the very Spirit it ſelfe, by which he wrought and preacht in an high degree, whom he pronounced unpardonable: It were enough to ſin againſt any one doctrine, promiſe or threat, or command of the Spirit, as thouſands doe daily, and many of you before me have done. Speak before the Lord and anſwer for your ſelves, what one ſound reproofe, what truth of Gods Spirit, either of Law or Goſpel hath pierced many here for their dead hearing, tyring out the hearts of Gods Miniſters, for their drunkenneſſe, uncleanneſſe, baſe tongues, lying, and the like? But ſome there are, who have ſet themſelves againſt the Spirit it ſelfe of truth and ſincerity in the Preacher: Witneſſe this, That the more faithfull he is, the more they have raged againſt him and rebelled; nay ſome have ſtudied how to make the ſincerity of the Preacher his ſnare, entrapping him in thoſe ſpeeches wherein (perhaps not with ſo much caution, yet with as great ſincerity as is poſſible for ſinfull fleſh) he hath expreſſed himſelfe for their good: And if not ſo, yet they wilfully have ſlept and lived in ſecurity under it: As *Nicodemus* told Chriſt, that the Phariſees (his fellowes) knew him to be from God in their conſcience, but yet ſmothered their light.

1 Sam. 24. 4.

Matth. 12. 31. 32.

Joh. 3. 2.

Oh fearfull ſinne! How dare any of you provoke the wrath of God thus to ſmoke againſt you? I remember that example of them who came to Chriſt and practiſed this treachery: Maſter (ſay they) we know thee to be from God, and teacheſt the word ſincerely, not caring for the perſon of any: Tell us then, Is it lawfull to give tribute to *Ceſar* or no? As if they ſhould ſay, Thou preacheſt ſincerely, therefore wee come to cut thy throat with thine owne words. Worſe then *Herod* in this kinde, who murthered *Iohn* halfe againſt his will, and afterward feared that he was riſen, and could have no peace, becauſe he had ſlaine ſo ſincere a witneſſe of God; but theſe would ſhed the bloud of ſuch, and no whit blanke, but thinke they doe God good ſervice. But ſay that all are not ſo vile, yet how many of us are there who being guilty in our owne conſcience of our ſinnes, and of the ſincerity of the reprover, yet hold their owne and will not come in, will not diſcerne a gift of God above any thing which man can reach unto, but reſiſt it. Partly by their ſlightneſſe, partly that they are ſo full of their owne matters, contentions with others, covetous courſes, politicke principles and ſelfdeluſions, with pride of heart, ſtoutneſſe and diſdaine, techineſſe, and reliques of ſome old bitter roote which is bred in the bone, or ſuch like evills, and the love of them; will not be drawne by any ſincerity of the Miniſter to forſake theſe wayes which long cuſtome hath hardned them in; but rather become more pathed in their ſinnes by much beating upon: To whom I ſay, will you never bethinke you? Will it

Matth. 16. 22. Mark. 11. 31.

Matth. 14. 2.

Joh. 16. 2.

2 Kings

The misery of contemners.

not be bitternesse in the end? What will you deferre all till death? And then (as others have done) cry out for the Minister, and empty out your whole heart, and say, Oh Sir, I knew of a long time that you spoke unto me from God, but, what for one cause and what for another, I contemned the love and compassion wherewith you spake, dallyed with God, and sinned against my owne soule, and that tender honesty of your reproofes and admonitions; Oh you have been patient long and borne with my frowardnesse! But now if I live, I hope I shal see your affection, honour your Ministery, humble my selfe under your terrors, beleeve the promises, reforme my wayes! Oh doe you delay till now! But who can tell whether God will not leave you at such a time to the former hardnesse of your heart? Or if not, yet whether your humiliation will prove sincere or false, as being on the racke? Whether God will take you away in your dallyings or no, ere that day? It is not safe venturing: But most wise and safe to yeeld to the sincerity of good counsell while it is given ere it be too late. This know, that whereso-

Prov.1.26.

ever God hath a sincere Minister, he shall never goe without honour, although it be in the destruction and finall conviction of the gainsayers. Take heed you be none of them whom this guilt ceazes upon.

Vse 6.

1. Branch. Instruction. Gods counsells are most sincere.

Rom.15.3. Rom.5.7.

Sixtly, this is Instruction, and that in two kindes: The former this, To judge by this rule, what great reason God hath to presse us to obey all his offers, counsels, exhortations, promises. To be sure (although we should say all men are lyars, and seeke themselves) yet the Lord is sincere, faithfull, he cannot seeke his owne ends to our hurt. Hee cannot bee benefited by us: his are the sheep upon a thousand mountaines. Psal.50.10. he needs not our wealth, but goodnesse reaches not to him Psal.16.2. Who hath given to him first, and it shall not be restored? Nay the Lord Jesus our great Prophet, hath even stript and emptied himself of all his excellency and glory to make us rich and glorious, Philip.2.5. He craves nothing of us in all his counsells and dispensations, but to beleeve and be saved, he sought not to please himselfe, but us, even to be murthered for enemies, if we obey him, to be sure he hath deserved it: doubtlesse for the base and ungodly, none would dye: But when we could not profit him, but were traitors, hee shed his bloud for us! all to breake our hearts: Give him but faith and obedience, and take the fat of Rams to thy selfe; he taskes thee not to the cost of Jewish worship, or Popish waste: Doe but maintaine his Ministers, and poore Saints, and there is all he tyes thee too: Oh then! if thou heare not the voice of this Prophet, so faithfull in all his house, who seeks thine ends in his owne, how shalt thou be able to stand before him? Oh! thou shouldest stoope and say, Lord thine honour and ends, shall be dearer to me then mine owne salvation: And thy Ministers shall prevaile the rather for thy sake, for they urge us to be reconciled in thy Name.

Vse 6.

2. Branch.

To draw therefore to an end, let this be Instruction to all that enjoy the mercy of a sincere Minister and Counsellor: Thinke not that God doth enjoine him to be faithfull, and leave you to your liberty, to bee hollow, to looke between the fingers, and to escape in a mist: except you get an heart of candor and simplicity, it will little boot him to teare his

his tongue to the ſtumps, and kill his ſpirits in plaine reproofe and counſell. No, as I told you in the former Doctrine, ſo now ſhortly I touch upon it, and haſten to an end: Doe as thoſe Dutch did to their new elected Prince of Orange, preſent a ſincere Miniſter with a ſincere heart; better then that golden open heart which there I ſpake of, as rich as it was: A man may be faithfull, and yet miſtaken by unfaithfull hearers: Therefore let people alſo be meet and apt tinder to take this ſparkle, and kindle by it: let them bring all ingenuity and humbleneſſe of heart to embrace it, that ſo it may be well beſtowed; elſe he doth well, but thou ſhalt pay for it. To this end, take Saint *Peters* counſell, Caſting away all ſuperfluity of maliciouſneſſe, prejudice, diſtemper and envy: As new borne babes covet the ſincere milke of the word, that you may grow thereby. Receive it as it is, it is ſincere, and take it ſincerely. His ſimilitude is very pithy: A new borne babe looks ſimply and only at the milke that it may be nouriſhed and grow: Though it bee the child of a Prince and ſucke the breſt of a meane nurſe, yet it turnes not away in diſdaine, but takes the breſt without any more adoe. So I ſay to you, Take heed of curioſity, conceits, partiality, fulſomeneſſe, if the milke and nurſe be both cleer and ſincere, deſcant not, but like a babe covet and embrace it, to thrive and grow by it. Alas! what ſhould it boot thee to conceit that the Miniſter means thee worſe then he ſpeaks? Or what ſhould it boot him to doe ſo? If his words may beare a good as well as a bad conſtruction, why ſhouldeſt thou faſten a bad? Is it not an heatheniſh ſinne, Rom. 1. to conſtrue all in the worſt part? If he do ill and I take it well, my bloud not be ſhed; but if his counſells be ſincere and I perverſe, my ſoule ſhall pay for it. Rather thinke, although he ſhould not be ſincere, yet the reproofe is juſt, rather then cavill againſt him being upright; however if thou be ſincere to thy head, it ſhall be as balme; for to ſnort in thy ſinne were deadly. And ſay that a Miniſter ſhould erre, on which ſide were it better for thee to erre, whether in ſmiting thy impoſtume or ſmoothing thee?

People muſt be ſincere and open to receive counſell. 1 Pet. 2. 1.

Simil.

Ezek. 18.

Pſal. 141. 5.

Once an enemy wounded the ſide of another that fought with him, and let out a ſore which neither love nor money could doe: Put caſe thou wert under the Miniſtery of a dawber and flatterer, were it not a plague? It is not the priviledge that meane perſons have above the noble, the great and mighty, that the former may have ſincere counſell when the other cannot come by it? It is not their commodity, but thine, (though it were to be wiſht to be theirs moſt of all) but alas it is denied them! They cannot ſay as forelorne *Nero* did, have I neither foe nor friend to ſtab me? For they have enemies to kill them by flattery, but few friends to wound them in love. As of late it appeared in a great man (being in diſcontent) who viſited a Miniſter and deſired counſell from him: The Miniſter dealing very roundly and home with him, the Gentleman wondred, profeſſing that no friend in the world had ever ſaid ſo much to him, and thanked him for it. This argues that great ones meet with little plaine dealing. If it be then the priviledge of the meaner ſort to be ſincerely counſelled, who ſhould bee ſuch a foole as to forfeit it by his frowardneſſe? Put caſe that ſincerity ſee cauſe to deale more roughly and ſharply with us then we expected, and

Poore people have a priviledge above the rich in this, that they be reproved.

2 Kings

ſome vineg ar into our ſores; yet we know that milke ſodden well (though it run over) is better then raw; ſo it is better to be told of our ſins too much, then murthered with flattery; ſay we therefore to a ſincere Miniſter, loving friend, here is my heart hand and all; I am as thou art, and my horſes as thine, mine heart is as open to reproof and counſell, as thine is to give it. I dare not nouriſh a lowring heart againſt thee.

Vſe 7. Comfort to ſincere Counſellors. Proverb.

Laſtly, this affords Conſolation to all ſincere Counſellors. For why? Their counſell is not frothy and light in the ballance, but weighty, deſerving audience. Let them therefore count it their requitall to themſelves in that their vertue is in it ſelf contentfull. For why? A faithfull counſellor ſhall be honoured at laſt more then a flatterer, whoſe words goe downe into the bowells to rot them, when as the other heale the inward parts. What although ſincerity is juſtled to the walls, hated, purſued to the death? As *Iohns* plainneſſe by *Herod*, *Micaja's* by *Ahab*? I doubt not but when the arrowes ſtucke in *Ahabs* ſides *Micaja* was honoured, firſt or laſt it will be ſo: There is none ſo deſperate, but at a time they adore ſincerity, and call it a jewell. Even our very enemies being Judges our faithfulneſſe is honourable. Let us therefore hold on our practice, and not be diſcouraged: Had theſe ſervants (thinke we) any cauſe to repent them of their counſell when they ſaw him cured? No, they would not for a world have concealed it; but now they were glad that they gave not place to their Maſters madneſſe, or their own feare of his ill will; and that by this craft of theirs (even of ſincerity) they had conquered him: Oh how many temptations we have within and without to lay downe our counſells and give all over, thinking wee ſhall tire our ſelves and prevaile little, purchaſe ill will for our love, and hatred for our ſincerity, and that would grieve us? Grive us: nay it would have grieved us if we had beene hollow; but there is no cauſe of griefe now, whether our counſell take or not, our labour is with God. Sonne of man, ſaith God to Ezek. 18. If thou ſeeſt the plague comming, and ſhalt plainly tell them of it, thou haſt ſaved thine owne ſoule, their bloud ſhall be upon their owne head if they beleeve not. Here is the ſeaſon of upbraiding by baſe Rebels for our plaine dealing. But bee of good cheere, hereafter will be the day in which wee ſhall be admired: when the Lord ſhall arraigne all Sycophants for their flattery, and ſpilling the bloud of ſoules and the bloud of Chriſt the price thereof; then conſcience ſhall rend them in peeces, then all their owne ends of gaine or ambition ſhall vaniſh, and then they will cry out, Oh that we had beene faithfull! Then ſhalt thou be comforted, and they tormented: yea let all ſuch as have received good counſell rejoice and bee thankefull. *David* having heard *Abigails* plaine counſell was rapt into praiſe unto God: Oh (ſaith ſhe) my Lord it will not grieve thee when thou ſhalt ſit upon the throne that thou haſt obeyed thine handmaid, and not ſhed innocent bloud! Grieve thee: nay wonderfully glad thee that thou ſcapedſt ſuch a diſaſter. Oh (ſaith he) bleſſed be the Lord, and bleſſed be thy counſell which hath turned off my ſword from this fact, which elſe I had committed! ſo ſhalt thou bleſſe God for a counſellor, and for mercy to perſwade thee by it, and ſay, it was ten to one that I tooke it; I had as many temptations to reject it as *Naaman* had here, which

1 Sam. 25.

if

if I had, I had gone on in my unbeleefe and pride to hell, which gulfe I have now ſhot. We need not aske whether *Naaman* comforted himſelfe in following the advice of his Servants. Concerning which, the verſes following entreat. Thus much for this third argument of the Servants; *viz.* the ſincerity of *Eliſha* his counſell. There is yet one more which now I come to, and ſo finiſh the whole Verſe.

Their fourth and laſt argument from compariſon.

And that is in the laſt words [How much more when he ſaith unto thee, waſh and be cleane?] It is taken from a compariſon of unequalls: Thus, thou pretendeſt great reſpect to the Prophet in greater things, this is but a ſmall one; if thou meane as thou makeſt ſhew, thou muſt needs obey in the leſſer, if thou meantſt it in the greater, elſe thou ſhouldeſt be but hollow and not to be truſted.

Doctrine. The faithfull in greater things, will much more be ſo in ſmaller.

The point is, He that is honeſt and upright, if he be faithfull in greater things, will much more be ſo in ſmaller. This point attends the former very fitly: That called upon us for the breſtplate of righteouſneſſe: This puts upon us the belt or girdle of Truth: Both are peeces of the Chriſtian armor, Epheſ. 6. and the ſumme of it is, That where truth is, there is proportion and equalneſſe: A man may know where to have an honeſt man, if he ſhew forwardneſſe in great things, by good reaſon, a man may expect readines to do ſmaller matters. He is but a meer boaſter and hypocrite, who makes great ſhewes of doing this or that, but being put to the triall, ſhrinkes his neck out of the collar, even in trifles; no man judges ſuch a one to be any better then a gull. But to ſpeak a word or two in the Proofe, and ſo breefly come to the Uſe. The ground of it may be fetcht from that ſpeech of our Saviour, If you be unfaithfull in the leſſer things, (the Mammon of this world) who will truſt you in the greater Treaſure? That is, if you may not be truſted in the diſburſing of a little pelfe and traſh that periſheth, for the good of the body, and releefe of the poore, who will truſt you in the diſpenſing of heavenly treaſure to the comfort of the ſoules of ſuch as need it? As if he had ſaid, The Law of equity ſuppoſes that if you were faithfull in a greater, you might be well truſted with the leſſer; but if the leſſer bewray you to be unfaithfull, doubtleſſe much more would you be ſo in the greater: If I ſhould betruſt a man with twenty ſhillings to diſtribute it among poor folke, & the party ſhould deceive me and rob the poor of it, I durſt hardly truſt him to be my Executor to disburſe a great ſumme to their uſe. The reaſon is good and holds ſtrong, that baſeneſſe of heart which hinders him from the leſſe by reaſon of a trifle, would aſſuredly much more withdraw him by a greater booty, and try his falſhood. And ſo by contraries. But I will adde a Reaſon or two.

Luke 16.11.

1. Reaſon.

Firſt, Religion agrees well with naturall principles, and admits thoſe conſequences which reaſon allowes. Now there is nothing more common in nature and reaſon then this, That every whole muſt needs containe his parts, and every general his particulars: for why? its greater, and therefore includes his leſſer. Againe, we have a rule iſſuing from hence, That which availes in the greater, much more availes in the leſſer. Whether greater in quantity the greater circle includes the leſſe, the perfecteſt figure as a circle, comprehends a leſſe perfect, a s a cube; or in quality, as a greater heat containes a leſſer, a greater light (as the

2 Kings

Sun) containes the leſſer, as the Moone: So in other degrees, greater ſtrength containes a leſſe; in numbers, hundred comprehends ſcores; oftneſſe comprehends ſeldomeneſſe; in notions, the more unlikely comprehends the leſſe; the more difficult, the more eaſie; and arguments may eaſily be drawne from the one to the other to convince any that is guided by ſound reaſon. Therefore it muſt hold in Religion alſo.

2. *Reaſon.* Secondly, God is the God of order, and his off-ſpring is like him; Religion is an orderly thing, no confuſion. But if men might goe to worke as they liſt, and goe out and in, be off and on, in greater matters conſcionable, in leſſer careleſſe, bound to no rule, where ſhould wee have or finde men? Religion being the ſeed of God, acts and workes the heart to grace or duty by an infallible principle; ſo that who ſo makes conſcience of great things, doth it upon a command of God, and not only for obſervation ſake or baſe reſpects: Now he who is guided by a command, conſiders it according to the extent of it, and if he bee willing in caſes of difficulty to obey, he is much more ready to obey in eaſier and leſſer, becauſe elſe he ſhould juſtly queſtion his ſincerity in the greater. The ſame generall tye lying upon the ſoule in both great and ſmall, the ſoule dares not offend in the ſmall, leſt it ſhould ſeeme to obey the greater for ſome ends of it owne to avoid the ſhame which the neglect of the greater might rather cauſe, then the violation of the ſmaller.

3. *Reaſon.* Thirdly, faithfulneſſe in the greater takes away that barre of falſhood which might hinder the performance of the ſmaller: Perhaps a falſe heart might poſſibly buckle to a greater worke of Piety or Charity, then to a ſmaller, becauſe it ſees more carnall content accruing to it ſelfe by the greater then by the ſmaller. But a ſincere heart that abhorres falſhood, is carried by another inſtinct, and cares not ſo much what men thinke, as what God thinkes, remembring that ſpeech, Not he who men praiſeth is a true Jew or Chriſtian, but whom God praiſeth. The argument in ſundry reſpects prevailes with a Chriſtian from the leſſer to the greater, as well from the greater to the leſſer: When great duties lye upon him to be done, he argues thus, Shall I make conſcience of ſmaller, ſecreter offences, and ſhall I not much more abhor the groſſer? Doe I provide for my owne peace in the ſmaller, ſo that the leaſt gnat makes me ſtraine, and doe I not make much more conſcience of greater, which would more waſte and weaken my peace? So in good things: Doe I make conſcience of ſmaller duties, as to give an almes, to rule my tongue, or a paſſion wherein God is leſſer honoured; and doe I not much more regard the maine duties of faith, and the purging of my heart and inner man from hypocriſie, in which I ſhould honour him much more? Again, when the queſtion is of leſſer ſinnes avoiding, or duties doing, then it diſputes another way: Have I found the yoke of God light unto me in thoſe things which I feared my baſe heart would never be drawne too, becauſe of their difficulty and danger, and ſhall I draw backe in ſmaller wherein no ſuch hurt or hardneſſe is to be feared? Surely this were to requite God evill for good, and to bewray my lewdneſſe, that I ſeeke ſtarting holes and excuſes to ſhake off the yoke when I ſee the leaſt crevis of liberty to the fleſh afforded; ſo that

Rom. 2. ult.

that I will ſerve God no more then needs muſt, and would ſhift my hands of the greateſt much more, if the neceſſity thereof, and the expectation of others did not compell me.

So then the point is cleer: He that is faithfull in a greater, will be ſo much more in the leſſer. Howbeit the point muſt be underſtood aright, and according to the naturall meaning and intent of it; we muſt therefore qualifie (Greatneſſe) and (Smalneſſe) in their due meaſure, or elſe the point will not hold. Explanation of the point.

Firſt, we muſt qualifie men aright in their opinion, for to ſome men that may ſeem greateſt, which to another is ſmalleſt, and another may judge that leaſt, which another thinks greateſt: When that young man came to our Saviour and told him, He had kept all the Commands from his youth, our Saviour anſwered him, Goe ſell all. The ſcope of Chriſt was to confute his preſumption, in keeping all by laying open his inability to keepe one, and that leſſer then any of the morall ones. For to obey one command in the manner and due meaſure thereof, is that which never yet fleſh could do: But to ſell all hath beene done by many, who never obeyed one command of the morall Law in his extent and fulneſſe. Now yet marke, this young man tooke it otherwiſe, for hee thought to ſell all to be harder then all the other, in which reſpect our Saviour ſearcht him to the quicke, but in the thing it ſelfe it was not ſo. 1.

Againe, in this caſe circumſtances prove eſſentialls ſometimes, as of time, for at ſome time a man may be fit for a greater, who at another is not fit for a ſmaller: As to give ten pound at his death for religious uſes, who perhaps while hee lived could not ſo well ſpare tenne ſhillings. 2.

Alſo the preparation of the heart muſt be conſidered: In the generall, *David* may be thought to be readier to pardon *Mephiboſheth* then *Shemei*, the one failing by error, the other ſubſtantially; but he was armed in the caſe of the one, bnt naked in the other. Beſides he beheld *Shemei* under a true colour, as ſet on by God to try him; but the other in a falſe, as ſuſpecting that a favorite ſhould be treacherous which was nothing ſo. 3.

So a generall cuſtome of corrupt nature may faſten greater degree upon a leſſer thing, and a leſſer upon a greater. Act. 14. Thoſe people of Lycaonia might have thought it a greater humility for men to abaſe themſelves to men, then to God: But Idolatry and corrupt cuſtome cauſed even their proud hearts to proffer worſhip to *Paul* and *Barnabas*, (as agreeing with a fleſhly heart) rather then God himſelf, whom when they were urged to worſhip, they tooke up ſtones to kill the Apoſtles. And endleſſe it were to ſhew the variety of reſpects wherein this rule may faile: But this I ſay, if the true natures of things and the judgements of men about them, be reconciled, taking things in their due extent without error, then the point alway holds true, He that is faithfull in the greater, is ſo much more in the ſmaller. For why? A Chriſtian is acted by ſuch a ſpirit as teaches him to doe all things with ſincerity, equality and proportion, both great and ſmall, one and another, leſt if any flaw appeare, it ſhould breed a diſproportion in the eye of God, or of man, and cauſe an ey-ſore to both: As when wee ſee a comely face 4.

joyned

2Kings

joyned to a crooked body, or a deformed and crooked back and ſhoulders to a good countenance, preſently there appeares an indignation in us at the eye-ſore.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction. Its a ſhrewd marke of unfaithfulneſſe to be forward in great duties, and backward in ſmall.

The firſt Uſe is for Inſtruction. It informes us of the reaſon why many men who ſeem forward in ſome greater acts of religion (eſpecially for the bulke thereof) yet faile moſt groſſely in the ſmaller. Surely it is an argument of great unfaithfulneſſe and impurity of ſpirit. For if there were ſoundneſſe, there would bee much more forwardneſſe in leſſer then in greater, as being joyned with leſſe damage and difficulty. But when the heart is impure, there is no ſure rule in a man to keep him in; he may bee franke in greater acts, and very defective in ſmaller. What was the cauſe that moved our Saviour to magnifie the woman that caſt in two farthings into the treaſury above them that caſt in handfulls of ſilver? Not for the ſumme, but the different ſpirit of both: She caſt in out of devotion, and would have caſt in more if ſhe had had it: But the other caſt in out of oſtentation, becauſe they were ſeen of men, and caſt in of their ſuperfluity and jollity of ſpirit; who (perhaps) if they had been moved in ſecret to give here or there a ſhilling, where their gift ſhould have beene buried, would have ſhrunke in their heads. Whence is it (thinke we) that many jolly fellowes are very forward to give ſcores of hundreds of pounds to Schools, Hoſpitalls, or in a publick ſort, who if they ſee private reaſons of contribution to many a decayed Chriſtian, or Miniſter, are hardly drawne to it? Oh! becauſe not the naked ſimplicity of the thing as to God, but the obſervation, publickeneſſe, memoriall and name of the one, better agrees with their phariſaicall ſpirit then the other: whereas if the true end were, reliefe of the diſtreſſed, they would as well caſt their bread upon the waters, as into an open ſtocke. I diſcourage none, nor cenſure any particular perſons for their almes, theſe are no dayes for it, I rather would ſpeake two words to further, then one to hinder; yet we know ſuch a diſeaſe there is, and who would ſpoile a whole box of ointment for one dead fly; doe both, ſcatter in private ſome handfulls, as well as powre out whole buſhells, and then the ſuſpition is taken away. Once I remember a man who long profferd his kindeneſſe to a Colledge, but ſtill left his gift ſealed up till death, then he would give all, but before nothing: Why? Alas! after death there is no pleaſure, which before there is, and men are willing to part with their wealth, when pleaſure in it, and power of it are gone. I tax none who give after death, but deſire to rectifie them; (for ability permitting) who ſhould not rather chuſe (in part at leaſt) to be his owne executor then to leave it to ſtrangers, not knowing what it may come to.

Mark.12.43.

Eccleſ.11.1.

Eccleſ.10.1.

Take an inſtance out of the ſix later commands, whereof every former exceeds his later. But why (I demand) doe many men ſeem to obey in the maine command which provides for the life it ſelfe of man, when as the leſſer which concerne his chaſtity, his wealth, his name, are ſlighted? He that does no murther, dares defile his neighbours wife, ſteale his goods or traduce his name? Doth not this practice directly croſſe my doctrine? Yes, but then you muſt marke, here is no honeſty, no faithfulneſſe in ſuch a perſon. Where that failes, there be many

ny cauſes why the greater may tye them, who in the ſmaller will bee looſe.

Firſt, becauſe a leſſer vice may be more naturall to the conſtitution of the body then the greater: All vices cannot roote alike in the ſoile of a bad heart, (at leaſt providence barres and bounds our corrupt nature that it be not endleſſe) all vices cannot be nouriſhed, corruption hath a ſtreame, if it ſhould ſcatter it ſelfe, one ſinne and luſt might croſſe another. Thou maieſt regard the life of a poore man, although thou be an uncleane beaſt, becauſe that ſinne is thy beloved and predominant ſin, and ſo maſters the reſt.

Secondly, this diſorder may ariſe from terror and feare of horrible impieties, horror of the penalty, unnaturalneſſe of the fact, and ſuch like bits and bridles which God puts into the mouthes of men, which if they were abſent, the rule would ſoone prove true; the committer of the greater, would make no bones of the ſmaller. Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, skin for skin, and all that he hath, will a man give for his life: but ſmaller things are not ſo perilous.

Thirdly, this may iſſue from vain-glory, when a man thinks he ſhall have a deeper eſteeme among men for ſome greater worke which in a leſſer would vaniſh, of which before: Or pride, when a baſe heart thinks ſmaller duties to be under him, and not equall to his great ſtomacke to undertake; though perhaps ſome great ones he will ſtoope unto, as more ſuting to his greatneſſe. We have a Proverb, Eagles catch no flies. So the ſpirits of great ones thinke that ſmall matters are a diſhonour to them, they will not foule their fingers with them. So much for this.

Vſe 2. Confutation of Popery.

This ſerves againe for confutation of Popery. They would beare us downe and make themſelves above us in the point of mortification (and God helpe, the beſt of us come ſhort of it in theſe daies of ſenſuality and fleſhly liberty.) But to goe to our Doctrine. They tell us that the perfection of ſelf-deniall ſtands in outward workes, of Penance and Satisfaction, in ſcourgings, in faſtings, in abſtinence from marriage, in courſe apparell, in ſtanding up to the midle in cold water in the winter time, in pilgrimages and ſuch like; of which the Apoſtle ſaith, Col. 3. ult. They have a ſhew of wiſdome in will-worſhip, humility, and neglect of the body, denying honour to the ſatisfying of the fleſh: But nothing to the true mortifying of the ſpirit, the frame of that ſtill continues the ſame; proud, conceited, and imputing theſe to merit as if they engaged God to themſelves by them. But as for our mortification, which they ſay is ſecret, and ſtands in the mortifying of our wills and concupiſcence, luſts and affections, the fruit of faith, purging the conſcience, Oh this is but a pretence of hypocrites, who come farre ſhort of their fruits in this caſe. And to confeſſe the truth, it were to be deſired, that we Proteſtants diſcovered our mortification in greater and more outward ſelfe-deniall then we doe: But as for them, this I ſay, if they excell us ſo much in the greater, how comes it to paſſe that they faile ſo much in that they count the ſmaller, I meane inward humility, denying of their owne affections? Is it not tenne times harder to get that grace of faith and change of heart into us, which ſhould make us abhorre

Popiſh mortifications diſcovered to be falſe.

2 Kings

abhor our ſelves in all our performances, then to tame the fleſh for a while, that ſo the ſpirit may gaine thereby a deeper opinion of merit, and giving full ſatisfaction to God for ſin? Did not thoſe thus in Mica 6. offer to God whole flocks, and droves, and rivers of oile and wine, and their firſt borne? Did not they eſteem theſe great matters? But what ſaith the Lord unto them? Doth he not convince them of their hypocriſie and tell them, That the things which he calls for are within? Outward things he cares not for, but to walke humbly with him, and to do juſtly, and ſhew mercy: Therefore it is evident, they & theſe fail in their account, and ſet a greater marke upon their devotion then God doth, and therefore are lyars: If thoſe things which they alledge were greateſt, ſurely they who are ſo forward in them would not be behinde hand in ſuch as they account the ſmaller. They would ſay of themſelves when all is done, our righteouſneſſe is as a menſtrous clout, and count themſelves (for ought is in them to merit) as Publicans and vileſt ones, unprofitable ſervants, whereas their building within riſes up to a greater height of ſelf-confidence by their outward caſtings downe; for they thinke that not onely they may merit for themſelves, but for others, and more then fulfill the Law, and ſo by equalling themſelves to Chriſt, they overthrow the ſole ſoveraignty of his ſatisfaction and merit. But O ye Popiſh mortifiers of the fleſh, adde one thing more, get the power of the word into you to divide betweene the bones and the marrow, to goe betweene your hearts and your corruption, and to caſt downe thoſe high things of yours, thoſe imaginations which ſet up themſelves againſt the ſimplicity of Chriſt, and then ſo farre as the word warrants us, wee will joyne with you in outward fruits; wherein, though many of us faile more then you, yet this makes your Doctrine never the ſounder, nor juſtifies your defect in the great matter of Sincerity and Faithfulneſſe. Wofull hypocrites! who ſtraine out a gnat, but ſwallow a Camel, dare not eat an egge in Lent, but dare kill your Prince. And although wee will not wholly condemne all thoſe patternes of humility, whom you boaſt of, (for certainly many of your firſt Monks and Votaries were honeſter then your ſelves) yet we know that their devotion had much wil-worſhip in it, which cannot warrant yours, much leſſe can yours ſtand, which hath neither honeſty within, nor warrant of the word without to maintaine it. So much for this alſo.

Eſay 66. 2.

Hcb. 4. 12.

Vſe 3.

Thirdly, this ſerves to inſtruct us how to eſteem of Gods adminiſtrations and dealings, and how to diſpute with our own ſoules in the caſe of our diſtruſt and infidelity. I remember the argument by which *Eliſha* perſwades that *Iehoram* and his company, to beleeve that God will give them water in that perill of drought: This is a ſmall thing (ſaith he) for the Lord to doe for you: For why? He will alſo deliver the Moabites into your hands, a farre greater thing. Sutable to which was that which the Lord would convince *Ahaz* of by *Iſaiah*, viz. the victory he ſhould have of the Aramites: Is it a ſmall thing (ſaith he) for you to weary the Lord, and to diſtruſt his power? Behold a Virgin ſhall conceive and bring forth a ſon, and ſhall call his name *Emanuel*, which is a greater thing then to give you victory.

2 King. 3.

Eſay 7.

To

To apply this: Let us learne hence to ſumme up the mercies of God vouchſafed us already, and let us weigh them in due ballance: If wee have ſeene him feed ſeven thouſand with a few loaves, doe we diſtruſt him to feed twelve Diſciples? Do we finde that he hath beſtowed upon us the maine, let us beware of diſtruſting him in the leſſer? For he holds this rule much more ſurely then we: We will truſt a friend that hath lent us an hundred pound, for the lending us twenty ſhillings, and ſhall we diſtruſt God? He that hath made our bodies and breathed in our ſoules, will he deny us food and raiment? Is not the belly better then meat, and the body then cloathing? Whence is then this our diſtruſt? If he hath given us his Sonne, will he not with him much more give us other things? leſſer matters? If he have made us a feaſt in the mountaines, will he not much more give us ordinary food in the valleyes? Had it not beene a baſe diſtruſt in them that came into Canaan, to thinke that God might ſuffer them to ſtarve in the midſt of a land flowing with milke and hony, having before by a miracle nouriſhed them with manna, quales, and the following rocke of water, in the deſert? Doth the Lord urge us ſinfull wretches by a Law, which himſelfe will not obſerve? If we be faithfull in the greater treaſure, will he truſt us in the leſſer, and will not we truſt him? Let us boldly urge the argument upon him by faith, and we ſhall prevaile, he himſelfe hath put it into our mouth: If it become weake, its becauſe we have made it ſo by our unbeleefe, and let it fall to the earth. We deceive our ſelves in the fundamentall promiſe, and then accuſe him that he keeps not touch with us in the leſſer: But if we would deale ſubſtantially in matters of weight, we ſhould finde that other leſſer things would follow our hand with eaſe, and the great ſhip of the main promiſe would carry all our ſmaller veſſells of our ſecondary ſupplies after it without our rowing or ſtrife. But oh how baſely doe we deale herein with God and our ſelves? We dare beleeve that God will ſave our ſoules, but whether he will keep us from poverty or no, or bring us out of debt, or enable us to maintaine our charge we cannot tell, we have not ſo cleer a word for that (we ſay) as for the other. Nay, rather we yeeld more to ſenſe and carnall reaſon in this, then in the other; or elſe make our ſelves thinke we beleeve the former better then indeed we doe. Alas! if the greateſt were beleeved, it were eaſie to caſt anchor upon the other: If the mountaine be given us, ſhall a molehill be denied us? No, but we are pinched more with unbeleefe in the leſſer, then the greater; if we had the like pinch of heart about the chiefe point of favour and pardon, would it not (thinke we) daſh the other, and make it nothing? Save my ſoule Lord, and for my body doe thou as thou wilt, for thou canſt not doe amiſſe, thou art tyed by thy promiſe to the leſſer.

How comes it to paſſe then, that thoſe who have taſted how ſweet the Lord hath beene in eaſing us of a burthen which wee never lookt to be rid of, that we diſtruſt him for faith in petty caſes? As for the eaſing us of ſuch a ſtrait, aiding us in ſuch a croſſe of bad wife, ſubtill enemy, helping us in the loſſe of a good Miniſtery or in the encumbrance of a bad, unprofitable people, or ill and unſavoury Miniſter, or ſtrengthning us againſt ſuch a luſt, or enlarging in us ſuch a grace, or granting us ſuch

Gods faithfulneſſe to us in the maine, muſt make us truſt him in the ſmaller things.

Matth. 6. 25.

Rom. 8. 32.

Read a ſpeciall place in Math. 16. 8. 9.

2Kings

such friends in our distresse of body, or blessing in our trade, or training up of children, or saving us and them from the customes of this present evill world, or giving us our daily bread: Oh thou of little faith! what wilt thou be heathenish? Shall the Lord cloath the grasse and deck the lillies, which labour not, nor spinne, and shall he leave thee naked? Not if thou labour and spinne out the promise in speciall. Other of Gods people have done so: *Habacuc* would not distrust God though no bullocke were in the stall, no calfe or sheep in the fold: *David* will not distrust God touching the Philistin, having killed both Lion and Beare; and concludes, that God will not forsake himselfe because he made a promise to his posterity. So let us doe. But if we want any gift, as of memory, prayer, asking questions, conference, we distrust God, although we have received greater gifts of the Spirit, which are onely peculiar to sanctification. We love Christ, say some, and his members without dissimulation, and our desires are to his name; but we have no gift in private prayer, fasting or uttering of our mindes, and wants: what then, doth not the greater circle include the lesse? If it bee meet for you, he that gave you the cheese, can give you the smaller; if hee doe not, you shall not need them: If you have got those that concerne the Kingdome and righteousnesse of God, the other shall be cast in. Only I adde, seeke God in the smaller, as well as in the cheese, and beleeve the particular as well as the generall; else although you have scaped a gulfe, yet a shallow may endanger you. *Iona* was abased in the whales belly, yet impatient for the losse of a gourd: Our fooles bable is more to us then a Kings Crowne. If our base heart be set upon a trifle, its with us as a penny cuttle, or a fine feather is with an Indian, more pretious then much gold: If God have kept thee in thy midle age, he can keep thee in thine old age: If in thy long sea-voyage, he can keepe thee from shipwracke in the haven, much more provided, that thou doe not entertaine any base lust which should eclipse thy former honour. As *Hezechia* dyed with his blurre through looseneſſe. But if thou wilt looke still forward to the price of the high call of God, and not backward with pride for that which is past, not be high minded but feare: God will not deceive thee; having escaped a Lion, a Beare shall not devoure thee.

Habac.3. 1 Sam.17. 1 Chron.16. Isay 26. Matth.6.32. Jona Cap.3. and 4. Phil.3.

Vse 4. Admonition and Exhortation.

Fourthly, let us be exhorted to that which is the scope of the Doctrine, even Faithfulnesse and Sincerity, for that will preserve in us that boldnesse and confidence whereby we shall beleeve that he who hath made us faithfull in the greater things, will not leave us in the smaller: otherwise nothing is more easie for us to fall into then this. He whose head gazes up to the clouds, soonest falls into the ditch; but hee who walkes with his eye upon his way circumspectly and narrowly shall not need to feare it. The truth is, our cursed spirit is so beset with corruption of all sorts, that no law, no rule of proportion can levell and make our lives equall and suitable. We thinke that because we have wonne the spurres in one great battell, therefore no lesser enemy dare looke us in the face: But let not any that puts on his harneis, boast as he that puts them off: When the house is swept and garnisht, then comes in the uncleane spirit and marres all our logicke and confidence, and makes

Ephes.5.16. 1 King.20.11.

makes many who beganne in the ſpirit, to end in the fleſh. Behold and obſerve the courſe of ſuch men as want the bridle of God to curbe them, there is no certainty where to finde them; though at a time you may perceive them above the clouds in their zeale, often hearing, vows of great reformation, yet you ſhall marke them in a ſhort time quite other perſons: for why? Not a principle of grace acts them (for then you ſhould ſee a proportion in them) but a pang, an humour, ſoone up, ſoone downe. Some time in the clouds, in admiring ſuch a Preacher, or Chriſtian, none are like them; by and by, (as the ſhip in the ſea toſſed from the tops of hils to the loweſt depth) none are ſo bad or meane as they, they thruſt them downe to the loweſt pit. Who abhors not ſo baſe and inconſtant a courſe? Their proud, prodigall, vainglorious, fooliſh, ſelfe-loving heart puffes them ſometimes to very deepe proteſtations and purpoſes what they will doe; but not wiſely weighing with themſelves that they want ſtocke to hold out, they who at ſometime will buy a good Miniſter into the Pariſh with great coſt, at another time will runne and ride to hunt him out as faſt; on their ſuppoſed death bed they bequeath great things to the poore, but being recovered they doe nothing (nay perhaps grinde their faces.) As thoſe Barbarians, Acts ult. now made *Paul* a God, but preſently a murtherer. Oh (ſaith one) I love thee from my heart, I would ride an hundred mile to doe thee a good turne, an hundred pounds ſhould not part thee and me! who would not beleeve him? But there is no ſoundneſſe within, for at another time, he will deny you his horſe to ride five mile, or to lend you five pound if you ſhould goe to priſon for want of it: what Chriſtian that feares God, would not looke cloſe to himſelfe, when he ſees the world ſo mad and ſo unſettled through a falſe heart? When a tender body goes abroad into the aire, or foule weather, he puts on his cap and hood cloſe about his eares, and girds up his loines cloſe, leſt any the leaſt dint or impreſſion of weather ſhould annoy him. So will a tender conſcience feele the ſmalleſt diſtemper, and take heed of the leaſt occaſions of evill; whereas a baſe heart is for all weathers, companies, occaſions. Let us then ſeeke to get into us a principle of conſtancy which may undertake for us, elſe an inconſtant man is as a wave of the ſea, and is unlike himſelfe in all his wayes: Beware leſt by this malady men caſt our Religion in our teeth.

Matth. 12. Inconſtancy in mens affections and diſproportion, argues faſhood.

Jam. 1. 4.

What is ſo common as this: We have a good Churchman as any in the Country, if he were as good out of the Pulpit as in it, and could play at ſmall game as well as at great in his worldly buſineſſe, family government, liberties, company, ſtudies, or the like, as in his preaching, none were better: where he does well (as he ſpake of *Origen*) none does better, but where ill, none worſer. What a ſad reproach is that to his ſtedfaſtneſſe? So for Profeſſors: Oh (ſaith one) for his Sabbaths zeale to God and piety, few may compare with ſuch an one: But come to the ſecond Table to the duties of righteouſneſſe, mercy, keeping promiſes, ruling his children, ſcarce one civill man in the Town, but is more reaſonable, compaſſionate, and keeps his day better. What, faithfull in the cheefe treaſure, and yet untruſty in the ſmaller? What principle doth this come from? Who dare diſpute for the cre-

2 Kings

dit of ſuch a man as confutes all arguments by his unfaithfulneſſe? *Iob* hath a pretty alluſion in one place, and bids us try the Unicorne whether he will be bound to our yoke, or draw our cart or plough; meaning that his wildneſſe will not frame to it. Surely a man might as ſoone doe that or tye the wilde Aſſe to our Crib, as binde an unſtedfaſt man to one ſettled courſe in Religion or duties: Alas! he is a man at his owne hand, an outlaw, maſterleſſe, not redeemed with a price from the ſervice of himſelfe and his vagrant humours, to ſerve God.

Iob 39.9.

Concluſion of the Uſe.

To conclude, labour for truth as a girdle to compaſſe thy ſoule, and that will ſet this argument on foote for thee, and keepe in thy ſides as a corner ſtone doth the walles from flying out: this will ſet thy courſe ſtreight: If thou haſt beene zealous in Gods matters, this will awe thee to a zealous care of a futable walking in the ſecond Table: If thou haſt obeyed the Lord in doing his will, it will urge thee to bee as conſcionable in ſuffering alſo for God; if thou haſt denyed thy ſelfe in the promiſe of ſalvation, it will compell thee alſo to renounce thy ſelfe, liberty and life for God in the matter of perſecution & the croſſe for his names ſake. It will alway be reading that maxime to thee, whatſoever is done according to God, is done equally. Diſproportion in Religion, argues great unſoundneſſe: And as it will argue from the, greater to the ſmaller for an holy ſutableneſſe, ſo it will doe alſo from the ſmaller to the greater for the procuring of the greater glory to God: For alas! what is our greateſt and beſt, but filly? Except he accepted us who hath ſaid, Thou good and faithfull ſervant, thou haſt been faithfull in a little, be ruler over much; enter into thy Maſters joy.

Matth.25.

Vſe 5. Diſconſolation to the unequall and unſound.

To finiſh all, this ſhould bee comfort to all faithfull ones, becauſe God will truſt them, and men wil honour them; and diſmayment to all ſly and ſubtill ones who cannot bee truſted. Let men plead for themſelves as they will, and inſinuate themſelves into the mindes of ſome Chriſtians as they can, thinking to encredit and ingratiate themſelves into their affections by their ſhew of zeale at ſome running pulls, or in their good moodes; yet God and ſuch as are wiſe to obſerve their inconſtancy, will be ſo bold as to doubt of them by their leaves. Its to be noted, that although *Barnabas* (for kindred ſake) favoured *Iohn*, *Marke*, to aſſociate him to the worke which himſelfe and *Paul* went about, yet *Paul* and the Church who had noted his ſtaggering before in the ſame worke, durſt not truſt him then, and it was a juſt blur unto him. The Lord warrants us to ſuſpect the inconſtant, and hee will have conſtancy and ſincerity to be honoured. Read the Scripture, and you ſhall obſerve a brand of infamy ſet upon them who have withdrawne themſelves from the yoke of God. Thoſe ſpyes how are they blurred? *Caleb* and *Ioſhua* how honoured? *Phineas* in the caſe of *Zimri* and *Cozbi*, thoſe Levites in the common defection of the Tribes to Idolatry, Exod.32. how are they graced? That curſe of *Iacob* was by this meane turned to a bleſſing, as appeares by the reaſon which *Moſes* gives thereof, Deut.33.7. If we have obſerved a man not to be truſty in great matters of executorſhips, or other truſt repoſed upon him though he be never ſo neer thee, honour him not with ſuch a truſt, for he hath diſabled himſelf. It is no uncharitableneſſe at all, but wiſ-

Act.15.38.

Numb.14.

dome

dome and caution. He that in a ſmaller office of the Towne hath been ſlacke and backed the bad, truſt him in no greater; let him have the repulſe with ſhame. The like I might ſay in other caſes. He that in marriage hath lived badly with one wife, let him not have thy voice for another till thou ſee a change: Put not thy child to be a ſervant to him or her, who by their ill government of former ſervants is diſabled in in their credit. Hee that cannot rule his owne children well, commit not the education of thine to him, either living or dying, for feare of unfaithfulneſſe. And ſo much for this Verſe, this Doctrine, and Lecture. 2Kings

The end of the Fifthteenth Lecture.

THE SIXTEENTH LECTVRE upon the Fourteenth VERSE.

VERSE XIIII.

Then he went downe to Iorden, and waſhed himſelfe ſeven times, according to the ſaying of the man of God, and his fleſh came againe as the fleſh of a young child, and he was cleane.

2 Kings

Tranſition to the fourteenth Verſe.

WEE are now by Gods aſſiſtance come to the 14. Verſe, and the upſhot of the foregoing Story; wherein I told you (brethren) that the fourth and laſt generall head of the whole is contained, *viz.* the iſſue of the counſell of the Prophet and of the Servants: That is the cure of *Naaman* both bodily and ghoſtly. A very ſweet concluſion of ſo ſad a diſtemper as paſſed betweene, and ſo happy as every one that would wiſh it a good end, could not have wiſht it better then it fell out. In the which that wee may ſteere our courſe aright in the beginning, let us doe with this as wee did with the former generalls, that is analyſe it into the naturall branches ariſing from it. The Verſe in generall containes the obedience of *Naaman* to the charge of the Prophet, and it hath two parts, to wit, the act of his obeying: Or the conſequents thence following: In the former we have three things: Firſt, the time when. [Then he went] *viz.* being by the counſell of the ſervants, and the perſwaſion of Gods Spirit brought downe from his former reſolution, and mollified to an humble ſpirit of obeying: [Then he went.] The Prophets meſſage enraged him. But the Servants counſel overpowres him. We may ſay of it as *Deborah* in another caſe ſaid to *Barak*: Thou ſhalt not have the honour of the victory, but a woman. So the Prophet muſt not have the credit of the conqueſt, but the poore Servants. The ſecond is the act it ſelfe, noting wherein the worke of faith conſiſts, even in the obedience of the ſoule to a word of command and promiſe: He went and waſhed ſeven times. The third is the extent of his obedience, it was full as large, and no more then the word

Explication and Analyſe of this fourth generall.

Judg.4.

of

of charge and promiſe imported, for he did according to the ſaying of the man of God: The ſenſe of it is, he went not caſually or for his own ends, or by compulſion, becauſe they would needs force him to it, but of his owne accord by the leading of the word. The ſecond generall is the conſequents hereof, and they are firſt or remote: The firſt and chiefe is the iſſue of his obedience, partly expreſſed and partly implyed; expreſſed at large, as if the holy Ghoſt would be as full in laying down the iſſue on Gods part, as he had done the obedience of the part on *Naaman*: His fleſh became as a childs, cleere and contrary to the ſcurvy and unſightly fleſh of a leper, and he was cleane, as if hee ſhould ſay, God was not wanting in his performance to the uttermoſt, nay did more then he promiſed, caſt in the cure of his ſoule, as an overplus to the cure of his body. The other is ſecret and yet manifeſt enough; for now the Text would give us to underſtand, That all his old wrath and conceits were vaniſht, all was now on the ſuddaine changed: Jorden was an happy water to him, (but rather his faith) for that ſcoured away all his diſtempers at once, never to be heard of any more. This for the analyſe of this Verſe. Other ſecond conſequents there are, not belonging to my purpoſe and ſcope in handling of this ſtory, and they lye in the three verſes after.

We come to the firſt of theſe, which (as I noted) the coherence of the verſe with the former, gives us to conceive of. To wit, that now at laſt ſeaſonably, (even as apples of gold and pictures of ſilver) comes in a calme after a great and long ſtorme. Who loves not to heare of reſt after labour, and joy after heavineſſe? Oh its as dew to the graſſe, and as drinke to the thirſty! *Naaman* was one whom God had a purpoſe to honour his grace upon at laſt; and therefore lo, ſo muſt it prove, though it were long firſt, even after many defeats and conflicts, yet he obeyes the Prophet, and is healed of his leproſie.

Doctrine. God hath a time of accompliſhing the worke of grace in his Elect.

The point is, God hath an appointed and ſet time for all his, wherein after all their feares and diſtempers, he will vouchſafe them an happy iſſue at the laſt. No corruption within them, no difficulty in the worke of faith, no malice of Divell, no diſcouragements by others, nor the longſome delayes of grace and mercy, ſhall finally deprive them of pardon and comfort: But at the time appointed, God ſhall bring forth judgement unto victory, and in the meane ſeaſon ſupport the ſoule from utter ſinking under her burthen. There is light ſowne for the righteous, though it lye long in the moulds by reaſon of cold ſnuffes of weather, yet a ſweet day at laſt will come, and a ſunſhine to fetch it up. Proofes of Scripture are ſo many that I muſt cull out ſome few. That in the Hebrewes agrees well with this in the generall, There is then a reſt for the people of God, a Sabbath of grace, of pardon and peace, after many unlikelihoods, and a Sabbath of glory after all their combats and conflicts here. That which *Elizabeth* tells *Mary*, Luke 1. is true of all whom God hath by his Spirit conceived in the wombe of the Church, there ſhall be given a performance to them of all the things which are promiſed from the Lord. A time there is for all things, as of toile, feare, doubts, reſiſtance, ſo of eaſe, reſt, reſolution and ſubmiſſion to the word: They ſhall be as glad of it as ever they were averſe and

Pſal. 97. 11.

Heb. 4. 9.

Eccleſ. 3. 2.

2 Kings

and aloofe from it. God creates the fruit of the lips, peace to them not onely who are neere, and faire for it, but far off, and unlike to ſpeed of it. He who commeth will come and not tarry, and bring healing in his wings. He will accompliſh the warfare of his Sion, and be as one that takes off the yoke from the jawes, and lay meat unto them. A moſt divine text is that of *Eſay*; I ſaw his concupiſence, and I will heale him: for why? He will not be angry nor contend for ever; for then ſhould fleſh faile, and the ſoules which he hath made. The like whereto is that in his 54. Chap. For a moment in wrath I ſmote him, I hid my ſelfe and was angry for a while, for a ſhort time: But with everlaſting compaſſions will I returne to him, ſaith the the Lord thy redeemer. Marke, The dayes of peace ſhall not be as the time of trouble, thats but an houre of darkeneſſe, but this a day of light: And ſhall recompence the tribulation with a ſettled welfare. As *Iob* when God turned his captivity, enjoyed all comforts with continuance: yea the Lord addes, This is no caſuall thing but certaine: It is as the flood of *Noah*, which the Lord ſware ſhould no more deſtroy the earth, and his covenant is as the Rainbow which when we ſee, we reſolve there ſhall be no more ſuch deluge.

Eſay 57.17. Heb 10.37. Mal.3. Hoſ.12.

Eſay 54.7.

Job ult.

1. *Reaſon.*

Reaſons alſo are many. Not onely from Gods ſecret purpoſe who knowes his owne, and therefore its impoſſible for any chaines to hold them from him: They muſt one day feele the power of that election, to call them, to ſave them, which firſt preordained them to grace: But alſo from the courſe of Gods revealed will and diſpenſation. For that grace which firſt prevents them, afterward aſſiſts and followes them, till at laſt it perfect the worke of faith in them. Both the former I noted in this preſent example; God prevented him by the meſſage of the Prophets ableneſſe to heale him by the Damſels meanes, and brings him to the Prophet, though after much error. The ſame God aſſiſted him there, and raiſed up his ſervants to be his Counſellors, though much pudder came betweene. And now at laſt, when the diſeaſe was ripe, he lets out the impoſtume, overthrowes Selfe and carnall reaſon, melts and perſwades his heart, ſo that, although he was more like to have gone from Jorden in a rage, yet now he goes and waſhes himſelfe in it, and recovers. And thus deales the Lord with us, if he have ſavingly prevented, graciouſly aſſiſted, he will powerfully finiſh his worke, elſe ſhould his power be queſtioned, and men might ſay of him, as they do of men who have laid a platform of a great building and begun the bottomes of it, but cannot finiſh. Now this were repugnant to the glory of his grace, and the power of his might, unto which nothing (be it never ſo unlikely) is impoſſible.

Luke 14.29. 30.

Luke 1.

2. *Reaſon.*

The ſecond Reaſon may be taken from the abſurdity and inconvenience which muſt follow, if this were otherwiſe. This I toucht out of Eſay 57. 16. before, and God himſelf makes it a reaſon teaching us to alledge it. If it could be otherwiſe, then it were poſſible that the moſt excellent nature of God, wherein he exceeds all his other attributes, might be queſtioned: I ſay, then might that compaſſion and mercy in God receive a great foile and reproach: Then ſhould God ſeeme to take from man his righteouſneſſe, which he is farre from, Lam.3.35.

To

To rejoice in the miſery of the creature, then ſhould he loſe his name and honour with his people, and not attaine his owne ends, but faile of his purpoſe: Then ſhould the art of God in the way of converſion, bee fruſtrate and prove uneffectuall, as not being grounded upon certaine foundations; then ſhould his promiſes incur the blur of unfaithfulneſſe, and in a word, the ſoule ſhould become as one in a wood, wandring and wildring it ſelfe untill at the laſt it lye downe in her owne ſorrow and confuſion, utterly deſolate and deſperate, which is the eſtate of hypocrites and ſelfe-deceivers, Eſay 50. ult. and ſo God ſhould put no difference between a poor humbled ſoul mourning for him, and one that compaſſes himſelfe with his own ſparkles. All theſe being of infinite abſurdity, and ill conſequence, it muſt needs bee that God will not bee angry, nor contend for ever, but finde a time, an accepted ſeaſon, in which he will eaſe the heavy heart of her diſtempers, and ſet her at liberty.

Thirdly, the Lord hath the ſpirit of man, and the paſſages and waies thereof in his owne hand, to ſway, draw, alter & turn it as he pleaſes. He formed the ſpirit firſt of his owne breath, knows how it defiled it ſelf, underſtands the wofull inability of it to heale it ſelfe, ſees and beholds the ſecret windings and turnings of it, how it wraps it ſelfe into endleſſe errors and wearieſome doubtings, he permits all theſe in wiſdome, and when he ſees his fitteſt time, he can turne the courſe and ſtreame of the ſpirit his owne way, though the rebellion, croſſeneſſe, feares and ſtaggerings thereof be never ſo perplexed. There is an abſolute ſoveraignty of God over the will and conſcience of man, that when hee pleaſe he can do with it as men do with rivers of waters, which though naturally they runne downeward, yet by art and skill are recalled, and derived to ſuch uſes as beſt ſerve to the benefit of the owners; ſo that the queſtion is not whether the heart would of it ſelfe encline, but whether God enclines it. 3. *Reaſon.* Proverbs

Fourthly, the power of the Spirit is ſuch, that it blowes at it owne pleaſure, and is of a moſt perfect freedome to blow where, when, how farre it ſelfe will, and is not in the power of any Divell, enemy, man himſelfe to croſſe it. God hath the winde of perſwaſion in his owne hand, and he holds the winde in his fiſt. All perſwaſions, arguments and motives doe ſo farre prevaile, or not prevaile with the ſpirit of man as the Spirit it ſelfe pleaſes to ſet them on: When he will overrule the Spirit, a little motive, a word ſpeaking ſhall effect it; when he will ſtop the power of it, nothing ſhall prevaile. As *Peters* nets lay by when the ſeaſon was, ſo when the time of catching came, all the fiſh came together and were encloſed under it. So the counſells of the beſt, wiſeſt, ſtrongeſt muſt lye by as ineffectuall, when God is abſent; the heart lies as a ſtone frozen into ice: no axes, mattocks, ſtrife of man ſhall break it: But when his heart is enclining to man, and meanes him good, then ſhall the Spirit lye in another coaſt, and ſuddenly thaw and melt the ice of the ſoule, and diſſolve thoſe ſtrong chaines which bound it before, and made it paſt mans skill to pierce it; ſo that as before nothing could ſoften it, ſo now nothing ſhall harden it. Now then marke, If this power be in the Spirit of grace, it muſt needs ſerve for ſomewhat, it 4. *Reaſon.* Joh. 3. 8. Luke 5. 3. 9.

2Kings

it is not needleſſe: Therefore it muſt ſerve to this end, to rid captives of their chaines, to ſpeake a word in ſeaſon to a ſoule that is weary, to carry the ſeed of life, and the promiſe into the poore and fatherleſſe ſpirit, and there to enter, open, and enlarge the ſoule ſo farre, that as it had no power to apply, to receive or embrace any light or hope, now it may be as the eternall gate opened by the eternall Spirit, who hath the key of *David*, and have no power to ſhut it ſelfe any more, nor to reſiſt the Spirits power and perſwaſion.

5. *Reaſon.* The fifth Reaſon is taken from the ſcope which mercy propounds to herſelfe in the turning the ſoule to God. Even the glory of it own ſelfe, and that nothing may ſhare with it ſelfe in this great worke of overpowring the ſoule. As ſhe onely hath thoſe weights in her hand which can over weigh the baſe and backward heart, ſo ſhe will doe it, when the ſoule hath ſtruggled and tyred her ſelfe in her owne way, hoping by her owne skill to effect it. Then can mercy onely ſave the ſoule, and remove the falſe principle which ſhe found in the ſoule to croſſe it, even when the ſoule ſeemed to be moſt earneſt in ſeeking it. The Lord ſeeks more to honour himſelfe above the ſoule, then to ſhew it mercy onely for the private good thereof; and when he findes that the ſoule herſelfe can make no work of it, is paſt hope in herſelfe, ſees moſt baſeneſſe in herſelfe, then is his fitteſt ſeaſon to worke for his owne name, and then none ſhall ſhare with him in that point whereof he is ſo jealous, that is his glory. Eſay 42.5. There is a ſpeciall text of worth for this point, which I wiſh all to obſerve. Eſay 57.17. I was angry with him, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart: But I have ſeene his wayes, and will heale him, and reſtore comfort, and create peace. What? While he goes on in his frowardneſſe, kicks againſt the pricks, and hath no diſpoſition in him to convert? Surely no: (for all the work of Selfe is but the frowardneſſe of a man with himſelf, becauſe he cannot have his will of God.) But then will God heale, that man may be ſet on ground, and bee convinced of his owne impotency; for no reaſon can be given why at laſt the Lord ſhould ſo overrule him, ſave meer mercy to one in miſery, except any will ſay, that a froward heart can merit any mercy. So then, the entire glory of the grace of mercy cauſes the Lord at laſt to finiſh the worke hee hath begunne; that both the Alpha and Omega may be his, both warpe and woofe from him. Thus much for Reaſons. Now I proceed to ſome Queſtions.

Eſay 63.4.

Three Queſtions. For upon that I have ſaid, ſundry may be made: Eſpecially theſe three. Firſt, wherein doth appeare, that a ſoule in the way of grace, and under the condition of it, may yet a long time lie under ſuch diſtempers ere it come to apply the promiſe; this may ariſe from the preſent caſe of *Naaman*, of whom the Doctrine ſaith, that the Lord now found a time of grace for him, though it were long firſt: ſome therefore may deſire to ſee it proved, that it may be long firſt, wondring that it befalls not the ſoule as ſoone as ſhee is under the condition of it. The ſecond queſtion may bee, why the Lord ſhould permit ſuch delayes and longſome ſtaggering, ſince that it may ſeeme it were better if it were ſpeedy, and put out of doubt at firſt. Thirdly, it is asked, by what markes it may appeare to a poore ſoule that the Lord intends

to

to finiſh his worke, and to ſet her out of her old feares and diſtempers.

1. *Queſt.* Way converſion is not perfected all at once?

To anſwer the firſt of theſe, this I ſay, experience proves it, that converſion is not finiſht in many a ſoule (which yet may be under a condition of it) as ſoone as begunne: But many things befall one in ſuch an eſtate, (I ſay not alway but oftentimes) which buffet and baske it ſhrewdly, put it into ſad demurres, feares and ſuſpitions, that all will not prove well at laſt, that ſhe hath begunne at the wrong end, and therefore not knowing what to make of it ſelfe, ſits in aſhes and heavineſſe a long time till God bring healing to her.

Anſw. Converſion hath many preparations, although the very act of it be at an inſtant.

To mention ſome of theſe out of the experience of moſt mens ordinary complaints: one may be this: That although they have been loaden with ſin, and deſirous of eaſe, yet by ignorance they are held downe ſo, that they know not whether there be any eaſe for them to be had or no: Satan ſo blindefolds their eyes, that the way of God is hidden from their eyes; their conſcience is oppreſſed, but they doe not feele that it it is a work of God preparing them to hearken after eaſe and remedy; but rather eſteeme it as a moſt unhappy condition fallen upon them to bring them to ruine, for they judge themſelves by others whom they heare of, who make away themſelves to be rid of their miſery: And indeed ſo it falls out to many burthened conſciences who live in blinde places, having neither Miniſter nor friend to ſuccour them with counſel, they dye in darkeneſſe and for lacke of light, and ſo they grow to interpret the ſenſe of their ſinne to be a marke of vengeance upon them (as if they were *Cains*) and to be weary of their burthen till they have laid violent hands upon themſelves: All ſuch I dare not ſimply condemne: But I may ſay, their way is darke, and they are blindefolded by Satan, and by groſſe ignorance, ſo that the ſcope of God, and the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt ſhould be hidden from them: During which, who wonders if they come ſhort of comfort? Sithence all hope of a poſſible remedy is taken from them.

Sundry inſtances named.

1.

A ſecond ſort there are, who for the preſent doe not put difference betwixt the condition and the performance: And therefore comparing their eſtate only with that which formerly they lay in ere they felt their ſins to pinch them; & feeling now ſome hope by the promiſe, they content themſelves with that, as affording them ſome diſtaſte of ſin, and ſome touches of conſcience, ſome flaſhes of deſire; alſo they feel themſelves loth to loſe their good affections bred in them, as ſorrow and zeale, and hope of growing better, and therefore none can diſſwade them from hearing, and prayer, and ordinances, becauſe they feele theſe to nouriſh affection in them; and thus their warmth tickles their hearts, and hereby (through ſelf-love and eaſe) they are held by the heele, that they ſet downe their ſtaffe, making a damme to ſtop their rebellious luſts from breaking in upon them, and beleeving that the meer abſence thereof, or reſtraint of their violence is a ſigne of true grace, though they goe no further. And were it not that their damme brake out often upon them, and their corruptions betraid them to themſelves, and their affections forſooke them, and left them to be dead and unſavoury, as before at the worſt; doubtleſſe they would wanze away as hypo-

2.

2Kings

hypocrites, and lye downe in ſorrow: onely the Lord will not ſuffer his to periſh in this error, but having manifeſted it, makes them turne a new leafe, and breake off their falſe confidence. But in the meane time, who wonders that they attaine no ſettling? For alas! Can their hearings, duties, affections or ſervices, take away the guilt of an ill conſcience, and give them any ſound bottome? No, doubtleſſe.

3. Thirdly, others who are ſet to a ſounder purpoſe, yet oftentimes are ſo confounded in themſelves, that they forget what God hath done for them; becauſe that grace of faith (which they covet) is abſent, this ſo diſquiets and perplexes their ſpirit, that they unthankfully forget what God hath done for them, nay they flatly, but falſely, affirme, that God did never any thing for them at all. They are ſo hooded by the Divell, that whereas they heare the Lord will not forſake his owne worke, but perfect it: They will not confeſſe that ever he wrought any at all in them: They that thinke ſo of them (they ſay) are deceived; for their hearts are hardned, ſenſeleſſe, careleſſe, empty of ſorrow and deſire, and meanes uſing: They never heard (ſay they) otherwiſe then as the common ſort of hearers, they were as good never have heard: Whereas it is moſt evident, that the word both of Law and Goſpel have wrought many ſweet preparations in them, if they had power to ſee them, ſave that a deep diſcontent of heart hath poſſeſſed them for the want of that they would have, but are not wiſely guided from extremities, ſuch as ſelfe-love may ſoon poiſon them withal. So that as it is with a man who goes upon an hill, over againſt which there is another in their eye, that the vally lying betweene is quite hidden from them: So is it with theſe, till the Lord reſtore the ſight of it againe. But in the meane time wanting the ſenſe of what God hath wrought already, how can they gather hope that God will perfect it?

4. A fourth ſort retaine the memory of that which is already wrought in them by the word: But their let is, that when once they move forward to the promiſe, to faſten upon that, they feele ſuch a marveilous cold qualme come over their ſpirit, that they feare they ſhall never reach it. They think it ſo divine, ſo ſpirituall a thing, they ſee the grace thereof, and the gaine ſo admirable, ſo above them, ſo beyond them, that they thinke they ſhall never compaſſe, it were too good for them to enjoy, it belongs to other gates perſons then they: The Lord hath ſomewhat elſe to doe with his Chriſt then to beſtow it upon ſuch: It belongs to ſome few choice ones, and peculiar folke, not to them; they that can reach it may have it: But as for them they deem it (if not a thing impoſſible to come by) yet exceeding unlikely, a thouſand to one, and very difficult howſoever, ſo that perhaps they may ſpend all their time and paines about it, and yet come ſhort too at laſt; therefore they were as good ſpare their labour as ſpend it in vaine. Thus as ſome thinke heaven eaſie, and they looke to be one, though there were but three ſaved. So others are on the other ſide ſo ſlaviſh that they dare not looke at it. And thus they would abide, if the Lord by degrees caſt not out this bondage: which while it abides, who wonders that they be far from this proſperity?

5. Another ſort are much held under with the ſenſe of preſent corrupti-

on

on prevailing in them, abaſing them, and making them ſtinke in their owne noſtrills, ſo that although God have begunne to worke in them, yet ſo long as the ſtinch of their luſts, their ignorance, unprofitableneſſe, hypocriſie, inconſtancy, pride, earthly hearts abides in them, and annoyes them, they cannot thinke the promiſe concernes them. Oh! if they could finde themſelves rid of theſe, they ſhould have hope, elſe none.

Others caſt their thoughts afarre off, and thinke that faith carries with it the implied condition of ſuch a change for time to come as they ſhall never attaine too. For (ſay theſe) beleevers muſt be holy and cleane; whereas we carry ſuch baſe luſts about us, hearts ſo hardned with ſins, that we cannot repent, it were death to us to forgoe ſome beloved evills, or to keep within a compaſſe of an holy courſe for any time. As good tye a Tygre to a rope and make him to plow the furrowes, as their wilde hearts to any duty and good behaviour. And when they are told that faith will purge their hearts, and they muſt not foreſtall God, then they ſay, though they ſhould repent, yet they ſhould never perſevere: Before they dye, the Divell (who owes them a miſchiefe) will ſurely pay it them; one temptation or other will foile and betray them, ſo that ere they die they ſhall revolt moſt fouly, and fall away like *Demas* & *Hymeneus*, and ſo goe to their grave with miſery, without returning to God, and beſides bring ſuch a ſtaine upon the Goſpel as will never bee worne out. 6.

There are others diſcouraged by the long ſpace of time ſince they came to ſee themſelves under the condition of grace, as to be loſt, broken, &c. and yet they come not to any ſound ſettling upon the promiſe, if God (they ſay) meant to ſave them at all, he would have ſaved them long ere now, for they were once farre more tender then now they are; they were at firſt onely guilty of ſinnes againſt the Law, but now they have added ſinnes againſt the Goſpel alſo, as it were drunkenneſſe to thirſt, yea they are hardned, ſapped, and paſt feeling: And moreover they ſee many others, who beganne farre later then they, yet are got before them, as in other gifts and graces, ſo in faith, and inſight into the myſtery of Chriſt, in which they grow not, but notwithſtanding all meanes, abide ſo ſilly, ſo ſimple, ſo ignorant and uncapable, that there is little or no probability of being better. They feele little difference neither (they ſay) in their courſe, but alway in darkeneſſe, ſad feares, going on and on, but gaining no ground, nor growing more toward the hope of beleeving; and therefore they conclude that they belong not to Gods number, they are not (ſurely) choſen of God, and therefore they may will and runne long enough, but they ſhall not finde mercy. And ſo long as this bone ſticks in the throat, how ſhould any ſavour of the promiſe goe downe their ſtomacks, or enter into their hearts? 7.

Another ſort by theſe and the like diſtempers, wax ſullen, and tranſported with melancholy and mopiſhneſſe, and grow therein ſo obſtinate, and that they will heare no counſell; they know, they ſay, what their deſtiny is, therefore let no body trouble himſelfe about them: As it is and hath beene, ſo it will be with them ſtill: They know as much 8.

2Kings

much as any Minister can teach them: They will not bee brought so much as to consent that there is any better estate then they live in, neither doe they thinke that any can have any more assurance then themselves, if they see any Christians merier then themselves, they presently judge them to be presumptuous hypocrites, and condemne them. Others do not so much censure others as themselves; and grow conceited against the meanes, will not be perswaded to heare or pray, because they doe but encrease their damnation; nay (but for necessity of nature) they would not eat their meat, nor drinke when they are athirst, nor goe to any, nor suffer any to come at them, neither aske, nor take counsell, for they say, these things belong to them whose they are: But they are none of Christs, and therefore have no right unto them. And yet even many of these (setting aside the malice of Satan, holding them under with this melancholy of body, or conceit of minde, or both) have given good signes of a loaden, broken and desirous heart.

9. To draw to an end, the most sad hindrance of all is, that the beauty of the promise, the good things of God given to his are not seene into by them: They have not yet met with the spirit of light and perswasion; somewhat or other hath dazled it, either their confidence that it shall be well with them, or their neglect of meanes, or their using them in a scanty, slacke and formall manner; or their subtilty, closeneſſe, slyneſſe, loathneſſe to part with their pleasures; or some bitter roote of earthlineſſe, which dampes the esteeme of the Lord Jesus; they cannot be gastered from the creature, it is so naturall, so rooted in them; or some base thing or other they will nourish (as sugar under the tongue) and hope to reconcile it with Christ, so that both may goe together, loth they are that onely bare and naked Christ should beare sway, and come into a naked house: or else I say, the true, kindly and cleere beauty of that which the promise presenteth to a soule under a condition, is by some meanes hidden from them, as by error, and misconceiving what faith is, by giddineſſe, by forgetfulneſſe, by fooliſh intermedling with
Luke 11. many things, one thing being necessary; by little meditation, applying, pondering, and incorporating the word into their hearts; by stumbling at the very point in hand, thinking that seeing good onely can and in time will releeve the soule; therefore let all goe, cast all upon God, and be lazy and secure.

10. But one more, I will adde of most usuall error to many, especially such as are ungrounded, and that is in the putting no difference between Doctrines and Truths handled in the course of their hearing. As it is a sad error of some men, that so they preach, it skills not what nor how: They little attend the estates, periods and degrees of their people, so the people are like them; so they heare the truth, they little minde what
2 Tim.3.7. truths doe most concerne them, and so alway are hearing, but never come to knowledge. Why? They are fooliſh and undiscerning. All is fish which comes to the net, and they embrace alike one and other; whereas (although all be good) yet it concernes them to looke out such as might fit their needs, and further them in the worke they aime at. Tell a woman whose fruit is come to the birth of this tale and that, aske her what linnen she hath, or what meat she will eat; doth she savour

vo ur ſuch queſtions? Are they not tedious? Doth ſhe not aime at one thing, that is, how ſhe may get ſtrength to bring forth? So ſhould an hearer that ſeekes the fruit of his labour, not while himſelfe with every truth leſſe concerning for the preſent, but hearkning after ſuch as may anſwer his doubts, cleere his objections, reveale that which he moſt wants, and which ſpeakes moſt directly to his heart. As for pleaſing himſelfe in being in the element of any truth whereof he ſees no uſe, it is irkeſome to a wiſe heart, although he reverence all. And theſe may ſerve for a taſte of many more lets, (which differ as men differ) and for anſwer to the firſt queſtion.

2. *Queſt.* I come to the ſecond. Since it is thus, what reaſon may be given to ſatisfie men in this way of good; for many would thinke it better if God tooke a more ſhort and ſpeedy way? But I anſwer, for many cauſes God permits it. To ſumme them up breefly. *Anſw.* 1. Cauſe. One is, becauſe the Lord herein lookes at ſome groſſe ſins which ruled and reigned in the former part of mens life and in youth, which are as iron moles, and will hardly be worne out of the fleſh, being bred in the bone, ſave by tozing and ſearching the heart throughly. Secondly, that he might breed ſome reſtraint in youth, and curbe them from ſuch offences as after muſt coſt a great deale of purging, plowing and harrowing, ere the ſoule will afoard good mould for the word. For ſure it is, the more rebellion the Lord meets with, the more irons he loades the ſoule with, Eſay 28. Thirdly, that he might exerciſe each ſoule in finding out her owne ſpeciall let, and not goe to worke in a fulſome generalneſſe. Fourthly, to breed in the ſoule a ſolemne and ſad thought concerning the way of God, and roote out that giddineſſe and vanity which puffes up the ſoule in a vaine preſumption and eaſe. Fifthly, to occupy the minde of the Miniſter in right and carefull dividing the word, and ſtudying to approve himſelfe as a workeman not to be aſhamed; ſtriving to be faithfull both in the gift of diſcerning ſpirits, that he may ſpeake to the purpoſe not at randon; as alſo to be painfull in catechizing, which containes the wiſe and leaſurely way of God, to ſcrue and dive into the hearts of men by degrees, and to ſoke the heart in the principles of faith, which they that want may be long enough in hearing Sermons ere they conceive the order of the myſtery of faith, and how the ſoul comes to claſpe with the promiſe. Sixtly, the Lord hereby corrects thoſe moſt wicked evills which have carried the ſoule in and under the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, eſpecially the dallying with the ſeaſons of grace, 7. That by this mean the Lord might clenſe the heart from Selfe in every kinde, and twitch up every roote and rinde of ſelfe-love which would dangerouſly mix it ſelfe with the promiſe. Laſtly, that the Lord (as I toucht before) might prepare way for himſelfe in the honour of the ſoul when it ſhall finde by experience, that all her ſalvation is of him, and he could bring it out of nothing, nay worſe then nothing, when as the ſoule lay ſtrugling with herſelfe without hope or remedy. So much for anſwer to the ſecond queſtion.

3. *Queſt.* The third and laſt queſtion is, how the ſoule may finde by markes, that the Lord is following on with the work of grace: That ſo it may be comforted in this, that ſhe is no hypocrite, and ſo ſhall not wanze and

2 Kings

moulder away as wax before the Sunne, but obtaine the fruit of the promiſe in Gods due time. For anſwer whereto, this I ſay, it may bee knowne by the contrary to thoſe markes which bewray hypocrites.

Anſw.

1. Marke.

The firſt ſhall be this: A ſoule truly under the condition of grace is very vigilant, ſtirring and obſervant of the ſeaſons which affoord grace; not only generally to hearken after the word, but ſpecially to obſerve the Angels moving of the water. The Lord doth not alway ſtir alike: The Miniſter is not moved, nor the heart of the hearer affected alike: Its rare when the Lord and the ſoule cloſe throughly one with the other, when the word is preacht ſo ſavourly and lively, and carryes the vertue of the ſpeaker with it into the hearer, and when the hearer meets it with a diſcerning of a ſeaſon from God. But when the ſoule meets with ſuch, Oh it abhors to dally and trifle with God, to greeve him with ſlightneſſe, either for the preſent or after: But confeſſes it to be a rare occaſion, preſſes hard with the Lord for bleſſing, and followes on as *Gedeon* did thoſe enemies, while the ſent was hot, left he ſhould be defeated. Thus doth a good heart watch her time, alway being upon wing for her prey, and loaths careleſſeneſſe of the watchwords of God. No ſin ſtings her more then former dallyings with the Lord, nothing brings her upon her knees in ſecret more then this ſinne, and the ſad fruit of it, nothing puts her in more feare left God ſhould forſake her, and ſuffer his Spirit to give over all ſaving ſtrife with her; nothing more is deſired then that the Lord would forget her many provokings this way, and ſtir her up with threefold alacrity to redeeme ſuch ſeaſons for time to come. Whereas an hypocrite ſees not ſuch mercy from God, or elſe vaniſhes in the fruit of them, lets all goe, and nouzles himſelfe in a blinde hope all ſhall be well, whiles yet old ſinnes and dallyings are upon the ſcore, unrepented of, and unforgiven, and the ſoule hardning more and more, and waxing daily more and more crazy, and unfit to be wrought upon.

Judg.7.

2. Marke.

Secondly, a thriving ſoule God and promiſe-ward, above all things nouriſhes life in herſelfe, not onely in ordinances, but in the courſe and way of converſation. Where ever ſhe become, the Spirit of life leaves her not wholy, but (more or leſſe) accompanies her ſpirit to preſerve it from deadneſſe, flatneſſe, remiſſenes, and ſuffering the worke of God to lye by in her. And howſoever ſhe feels a very body of death in this kinde, fighting againſt the law of life in her; yet knowing which is the ſtronger, ſhe gives not place: No, although the more ſhe ſtrives to be lively and ſavoury upon the promiſe and by faith, the more the death of corruption reſiſts her and diſcourages her: yet even in this darke belly of the whale ſhe caſts her eie towards the Temple, and dares not yeeld when yet ſhe is almoſt foiled; but diſcernes a baſe body of death from the deſire of her owne heart; and becauſe ſhe feeles a dying, ſhe judges herſelfe not wholly dead, but to have ſome life under the embers, which ſhe makes much of, and nouriſhes as one would hatch up one coale of fire upon dry ſtraw leſt it ſhould goe quite out. Such a ſoule abhors a daily deadiſh and ſad heart, more then death it ſelfe; labours to revive it ſelfe by all hot waters from ſwowning and dying; rejoyces when ſhe recovers, exerciſes her ſelfe with others (as well as in ſecret)

Jonah 2.8.

cret) to whet up that dull and weake edge of life and faith which remaines, and is glad to feele that it is not alway alike with her in this kinde. Whereas an hypocrite who never attaind to this ſweet life, is faine to ſhuffle as he is able, to counterfeit life and zeale, and when his endeavours ſucceed not, he commits all to hazard, and ſhifts off a dead heart as he can with head and ſhoulders.

3. Marke. Oppoſite to the ten former Objections.

Thirdly, theſe perſons may be knowne by this, That they diſcerne of the diſtempers which formerly moleſted them, and held them off from the promiſe, as may appeare by theſe particulars, oppoſite to the former objections named in the firſt queſtion. Firſt, they diſcover a mercy in their deep caſtings downe and feares, and in the ſpirit of bondage which they feele, they looke upon it not as a marke of wrath, but as the entrance upon the way of God, for their further humbling and making their heart tender, acknowledging it could not be ſpared, and looking into the promiſe for ſome hope of redreſſe. Secondly, they wiſely conſider, that the condition of faith, and the gift of faith it ſelfe, differ much; and therefore for them to reſt in any ſuch worke of preparation, as will not ſtabliſh their hearts in peace through the bloud of the Covenant, were a deceit of Satan, cauſing them to lye by the way when they have a further journey to goe. Affections and Ordinances they embrace, but reſt not therein, as wanting a bottome of the ſatisfaction of Chriſt to Gods juſtice, and therefore in that they onely dare pitch their reſt, renouncing whatſoever of their owne might ſatiſfie them. Thirdly, they wiſely coſinder what degrees they have attained in grace, and dare not forget or deny what God hath already done for them, confeſſe that thouſands want that which they have; yea that its nothing but ſelfe-love which buries all former mercies under a clod of diſcontent for that which they want, and with the loweſt humbleneſſe acknowledge themſelves the leaſt of all others, and that whatſoever is not hell, is more then God owes them, they count themſelves not worth the ground they tread on, ſubmitting themſelves unto God to doe with them as he pleaſes, and willing to be as he will have them. Fourthly, they moderate their own judgements touching the matter of faith, and deſire to looke at it as that gift which God in wiſdome uſeth for the ſaving of his; neither on the one ſide making it leſſe, nor on the other ſide more high and ſolemne then God would have them, for though it be too good for them to enjoy, yet not for God to beſtow, whoſe gifts although very precious, yet are moſt free; and ſo they ſhake off that baſe ſlavery of heart which poſſeſſed them. Fifthly, they conſider themſelves not as they ſhall be when faith hath cleanſed them, but as now they lye, and are objects of mercy, ſuch as God purpoſes to declare the riches of grace upon in due time; in the meane ſeaſon they are the vileſt of all ſinners, as alſo *Paul* and others were in their corrupt eſtate: They conſider that ſinne cauſes mercy to abound, ſo it bee not wilfully committed: And this is the honour of God to beteame it to enemies, hypocrites, proud, uncleane, prophane ones, yea Chriſt died for ſinnes againſt the Goſpel, an hard, dead, rebellious heart of unbeleefe, as well as againſt the Law: Therefore they ſee in that dunghill of droſſe (alway ſteaming out of them) an occaſion of mercy in

See Acts 2. 34. 35.

2 Kings

God, not of deſpaire, ſave in themſelves. And if they were as they would be, void of ſuch corruption, they ſhould need no mercy, they might plead merit. Chriſt came to ſave ſinners, and hath ſhut up all under diſobedience, that he might ſave ſome, even the weakeſt, unworthieſt of all others; for theſe will cun him moſt thank: Phariſees need him not. As for the dogging of their corruptions, they conſider Satan moſt clogs and dogs that ſoule which is moſt earneſt to be rid of them, whereas others are ſhut up in falſe peace, and feare nothing.

Rom.3.19.

Sixtly, they grow to this reſolution, not to caſt feares aforehand more then they ought, if God will pardon them, they doubt not but he will afterward purge them, ſubdue their corruptions for them, and finiſh his worke with perſeverance. They were not fit judges to ſpeake of time to come: What hath he who wants faith, to doe with the condition of him that hath it? They will therefore attend one thing at once, and not many: If once they can obtaine faith in that, they ſhall have the reſt: For why? Faith will purge the conſcience and ſet the beleever on worke to preſerve in himſelfe that which is already planted: Therefore they ſee it were a great folly to hinder themſelves of a preſent mercy through the diſtruſt of a future. Seventhly, they repent them of thoſe ungrounded cavills from the length of time, the example of others, and the feare of election; and with a mourning heart for that hardneſſe and unprofitableneſſe of theirs, they acknowledge it to be none of theirs, but Gods priviledge to appoint the times and ſeaſons of grace: They ought not to foreſtall God in this kinde, but wait his leaſure: They muſt not grudge at others but follow their example: Others are not gone ſo faſt before, but mercy can ſend them after with as good ſpeed: And as for election, it is not for them, its Gods ſecret, they know no ſuch matter that they are reprobated, but when they ſhall beleeve, they ſhall know that they are elect: Let therefore God alone with his ſecrets, confeſſe his Soveraignty and tremble, but apply themſelves to the revealed way of God, and behold his ladder and cords of mercy put downe unto them into the dungeon, and clapſe about them as they are commanded to do. Eightly, they look up to the promiſe, and thereby ſhake off their melancholy & ſullennes of heart, ſee the emptineſſe, the abſurdity of their froward hearts, which God doth as much deteſt, as they admire: They ſee a world of pride, ſelf and rebellion in it, and therefore deſire to ſend it to hell whence it came, and to turn their cenſure of others into imitation of their grace. Ninthly, and eſpecially, whatſoever hath witheld them from the promiſe & from beholding the excellency of it, in the meaning of God, in the bounty, truth and fidelity, conſtancy, ſtablenes, fulneſſe & ſufficiency of the ſame, they ſhake it off: they forſake other vanities & conceits of their own, their morall contents, their buſying themſelves about many things, whereby Satan (as by his golden apple) would keep them from the ſilver Bell; and therefore now, they reſolve to lay all other ſacrifices by the Altar till their reconciliation be made; to which end, they trade with the promiſe by meditation, and uſe all meanes to dive into it, and to looke into it, as the Angels into the Mercyſeat, till their miſery for want of it, cauſe them to venture themſelves, and jeopard their ſalvation upon it.

Micah ult. ult.

Jonah 2.8.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, they correct their looſe and generall hearings of the word, purpoſing to bend their minds, (as to all the truth of God without neglect, ſo) eſpecially to thoſe maine truths which they moſt ſticke at, and come ſhorteſt of, that their inſight into Gods method and way may be more evident unto them: As for novelties and fancies of men of unſtable minds, ready to carry them away from the ſimplicity of the Goſpell; whether erroneous opinions, or things which have ſome truth, but yet for the preſent are not pertinent or profitable, but might (under ſome pretence of zeale and devotion) withdraw them from their grounds ere they be ſetled, (which I obſerve to be a notable trick of the Divell to diſorder the courſe of a ſoule travelling towards heaven) they are ſhy thereof, and cannot cloſe with it. Let every one that deſires to know himſelf to thrive to Godward well, marke this whole Section. So much for this third marke.

Another is, That ſuch a ſoule ſtrives after that which makes moſt for her owne good, and for the juſtifying of God. Even that fooliſh modeſty which holds many under the hatches that they will not open themſelves to any, but keepe the Divells counſell to their owne hindrance, and thereby nouriſh unbeleefe the longer in themſelves, when they are convinced of it (as its long ere many will be) they abhor it, uſing all means with *Paul*, if by any they may attaine faith at laſt. They doe not as *Ahaz*, who being willed to aske a ſigne from God to confirme his promiſe, refuſed it, and let all goe at ſix and ſevens, pretending that he needed none, but would leave it to God without ſuch adoe. But he is rebuked for greeving of God by ſuch ſlightneſſe, who loves that his people ſhould take order to reſiſt their infidelity, and haſten to beleeve, uſing every ordinance, each occaſion for the atchieving of ſuch a grace. Such a reſtleſſe ſpirit they are led by, who keepe the price of the high calling of God in their eie, loth to loſe it, and preſerving the tender care and inquiry after it in their ſoules, as an object of greateſt excellency. A bottomleſſe, careleſſe ſpirit to get and loſe as faſt; and to ſpill that pretious liquor which God hath been long putting into them, they loath and deteſt, 2 Joh. 8. and ſtill ſeek to make up a full reward to themſelves, and cannot be quiet till the Lord give into their boſomes meaſure heaped up, and running over, that they may be at reſt. If they have any bottomleſſeneſſe it is for the world and the cares of it, but as for grace they keep all they have, and ſtill are on the gaining hand till they attaine their deſire. Pſalm. 84. No faintneſſe there ſhall be; but from ſtrength to ſtrength they goe full faſt, till they appeare before God in Sion.

4. Marke.

Eſay 7.

Phil. 3.

Fifthly, as they are alway haſtening the Lord, and impatient in reſpect of their importunity of deſire, ſo yet they are patient in reſpect of diſcontent & unweariedly waiting upon the Lord for the accompliſhing of their petition; They have learned that leſſon of the Pſalmiſt, Bleſſed are they that wait upon him: and of *Ieremy*, It is good to wait patiently upon the Lord. Its much to them that the Lord will come and bring healing in his wings at laſt, requiting long delay, as *Malachi* ſpeakes, with ſpeed, and as for urging the particular time when he will come, and how ſoone, they leave it to him, whoſe the ſeaſons of mercy are,

5. Marke. Pſal. 70. 5.

Lamen. 3. 25.

Mal. 3.

2 Kings

are, by whom onely the day of ſealing is appointed, they muſt wait. They attend upon a Soveraigne God who ſhewes mercy to whom and when he pleaſes; yet alſo his mercies are fare to them whom hee hath called to the hope thereof: Therefore their part is to get the ſpirit of ſupplication (alway attending the Spirit of grace, Zach.12.10.) which will hold out with the Lord without fainting, and concurre with him in his time of eaſe: In which reſpect it makes not haſte, but conſiders that each day haſtens Gods time. For as it is in the ſecond comming of our Lord Jeſus, ſo it is in his firſt: None knowes whether he will come at noonetide, or at the evening, midnight or cockcrowing, but come he will: So whether in youth, or middle yeares, or old age, thou knoweſt not; whether in a ſhort time, or after a long ſeaſon, whether in thy hearing, or at the ſacrament, or in prayer, or at a faſt, or in ſome great croſſe, or at thy death, its unknowne: Thou haſt a promiſe come he will, and therefore wait upon him, thou art not too good, and when he comes thou ſhalt not repent thee.

Rom.9.

Matth.24.end.

6. Marke.

Againe, this is another marke, That ſuch a ſoule ſuffers not it ſelfe to be taken up ſo deeply with the common mercies of the earth, that the mercy of pardon and ſalvation ſhould loſe her price, and wax ſtale with her. Oh ſhe ſtrives to put difference alway between the content which bleſſings of this life bring, and thoſe which the mercy of heaven affords. Give *Eſau* a meſſe of pottage, and his longing is ſatisfied: Give a child a bright counter, and he will forgoe a gold angell: It pleaſes a foole as well to have his bable as a Kings Crowne: why? Becauſe he is a fool and diſcernes not; ſo a wretch that never came in the favour of mercy, will equall it to any common thing, fill his belly, give him eaſe, cloath his body, fill his purſe, and you may rob him of his birthright. So hee have content any way, and for the preſent he is well. Not ſo that ſoule that longs for mercy: For why? It compares one with other, and makes as much difference as between gold and droſſe; holds firmly the eſteem of mercy to herſelf, and will not ſuffer the baſe vaniſhing creature to come between her and home, and ſteale her heart away by ſuch rattles and feathers as theſe are. It comes here to minde what *Zachary* ſpeakes, That the ſpirit of grace goes with the ſpirit of compaſſions: There are ſuch compaſſions towards the Lord in a poore ſoule, as there are in the Lord towards it: In the Lord there are tender mercies, as that other *Zachary* ſpeakes, Luke 1. [Through the tender mercies of our God] mercies of tenderneſſe and compaſſion to a poore miſerable loſt ſinner reaching to forgiveneſſe: Theſe are peculiar; not common, or ſuch as he beſtowes upon them whom he pitties not in their miſerie: Now therefore that ſoul that partakes theſe tender mercies, is as tender of them, and doth ſo prize and eſteem them that no other mercy can ſteale away the affections of the ſoule therefrom, nor ſtall the heart therein, much leſſe make tender mercies to wax ſtale and common, but ſtill the price thereof riſes till the Lord fill her therewith.

Heb.12.

Zach.12.10.

7. Marke.

Laſtly, note this out of *Naamans* example, That a perpetuall and ſure marke of a man who is grace and faithward is this, that his old perverſeneſſe, pride and ſtoutneſſe begins to quaile, and his great ſtomack comes downe. That heart which before was the heart of Leviathan,

than, as *Iob* deſcribes it, hard as a ſtone, now melts, and becomes ſoft as wax. This is a ſigne indeed of mercy drawing neare a poore ſoule: that even as before all turned to gall and bitterneſſe, and like bad phyſick wrought by contraries; ſo now the Lord purpoſing to perfect his work with power, lo all goes right, and the omnipotent arme of God ſubduing and caſting downe all high things that before cauſed the heart to ſwell and bluſter againſt the way of God, now molifies the hard heart and thaws it as the froſt by the ſouthwind. Oh what a ſtrange alteration doth the riſing Sun cauſe in the horizon? Fogs and miſts, and darkeneſſe vaniſh and diſperſe themſelves, and all the coaſt is cleare againe, as if there had never beene any ſuch? And marke it who will, thus it fares with every ſoule which comes to God; the nearer it drawes to the Sun of righteouſneſſe, the more melting and humble it is; all old quarrells and cavills, all old rebellion and ſtoutneſſe of ſpirit are ſcattered; when Chriſt once ariſes to rebuke the boiſterous rage of the ſea, (for ſuch is every wicked heart, Eſay 57. ult. even foaming, and caſting up mire and dirt) then on the ſuddaine all waxes mild and calme, and the place where frowardneſſe and diſtempers grew is no more found. Thus much for the third queſtion.

2 Kings

Job 41.24.

I come to the Uſes of the point, which are many fold. Firſt, it inſtructs us about a difference betweene the hypocrite and the ſound hearted ſeeker after God: There may ſeeme no great oddes in their paines and endeavours, both may ſeeme earneſt and longſome, both heare much, pray and live in the element of meanes conſtantly; both have their terrors, their hopes, their flaſhings of light and comfort; both have their ebbings and flowings, ſorrowes and joyes; but the one hath not the iſſue which the other hath: The end of the one is to goe out in darkeneſſe, the other to overcome and breake forth into victory. The end of the righteous (marke it Pſal. 37.) is alway peace, though after long toile and hazard: The righteous are ſaved, (though ſcarce and with much ado) and at laſt they come to the haven. They are like to them in the ſhip wherein *Paul* ſailed, though they had ſo toileſome a travell of it all the winter, yet God gave to *Paul* all the ſoules that were withhim, and bid him be of good comfort, for all ſhould ſafely come to land at laſt. The truth is, there is an ods between them from firſt to laſt, in their knowledge, in the work of the Law, their terrors, and of the Goſpell, their ſorrow, their deſire and the reſt: But that is not ſo eaſie for us to diſcerne. God only ſees that. But in the upſhot it is manifeſt: For then it appeares that there was a different principle that acted them, the one from himſelfe to himſelfe; the other from the Spirit of grace, for the honour of grace and the change of the heart. As Saint *Nazianzen* once ſpake of one of the Councells, that neither it began with God, neither would end for him. Looke well about you (brethren) for, God helpe us, the worke of faith ſeems to be perfected in few of us to any purpoſe; preaching in and out of ſeaſon, we have long had and all follow it; but to behold the ſad and dead point which many of us doe, and long have ſtood at, would ſtrait any honeſt heart to think of! one would thinke thoſe former trialls ſhould exerciſe every one of us to ſee what at laſt will come of all our ſtruglings and ſtrifes; I pray God

Vſe 1. Inſtruction. 1. Branch. Hypocrites & elect ones differ in their iſſues. Matth. 12.

Act. 27.

2Kings

God we prove not of the baſer ſort, that enter not, but faile of Gods grace! though it be long firſt, yet if at laſt our ſucceſſe anſwer our pains, it will be well.

An item to theſe perſons.

But its not amiſſe for ſome of us to ſuppoſe the hardeſt, and ſay, what if I ſhould not be of them, who ſhall end in comfort? All ſhall not: If I be one, what doe I running this round, and treading this maze in vaine? As neere at my death, as at my entrance: And like to one wildred all night, and in the morning comming to the place he ſet out! I beſeech you looke over thoſe markes above, hurt it can doe you none! God ſets us not to this taske of hearing and profeſſion for policy, and to keep us occupied, and from idleneſſe: No, he ſets us to heaven-ward, if we ſee not his ſcope, we may wander all our lives and never the nearer, and what a ſad woe would that bring with it? Many poore ſoules are afraid that death will come ere grace bee perfected: But I pray God it prove not the portion of many that feare it not, but are confident that the upper milſtone running upon the nether, the corne will be grownd; whereas alas! they have no corne between the milſtones, their ſoules lay not in for any ſuch matter as to get their ſoules ſaved and broken. *Eſau* thought nothing when he dallied with his birthright; but after it was gone, all his howling could not recover it: Be wiſe therefore, looke ſtill at the ſcope; the end muſt pay for all; be ſure your growths to heavenward be ſure, though ſlow; be ſure your conception be good, and that the ſeed of God is in you; then ſhall all your combats and ſtrifes be as *Rebecca's*, whom God told ſhe had twins: So be ſure there be a child a breeding, and true life, for that will beare you through, and at your birth you ſhall forget your ſorrow. Otherwiſe as the unhappy woman who carries a mole orabortive in her, hath many feares, and ſaith, either I goe with child, or with my death, ſo ſhall it fare with you. So much for this firſt.

2. Branch of Inſtruction. Cenſure neither our ſelves nor others in the matter of Grace.

Againe, it ſhould teach us neither to cenſure others, nor our ſelves in the paſſages of our endeavours & ſtrifes for heaven. Not others: To ſay thus and thus long they have beene ſtriving and making towards ſalvation, and yet they daily complaine as men that have got but little; alway in their complaints, doubts and conflicts: Surely I feare there is little in them! No, ſay not ſo: If they be the Lords, the iſſue ſhall bee good. Reaſons why God juſtly permits it thus, I gave before. Now I adde, that theſe raſh cenſures are commonly theirs who are little acquainted with the trade of faith: Alas! you know not what the ventures of this Merchant, and the toile of this husbandman are! Thinke not ſiniſterly of grace for the paines, and the ſeverall troubles that it brings with it: If it be more eaſie with ſome then with others, bleſſe God you have avoided many a rock and hazard that others meet with: But therefore to judge others doe it not: Say that their owne rebellion hath made an eaſie way to become hard to them, what then if they be ſaved any way, what skills it? The harder it is, and the more it coſt, the ſweeter it will be, and the harder to forgoe: Looke rather to thy ſelfe that thy ſtrivings be lawfull, then judge them whoſe ſtrifes are difficult; for ſo it muſt be till God have brought a baſe heart to lye downe at his feet with ſhame: Many a noiſe muſt pierce a dead heart ere it live; many a terror,

terror, and many a pang of ſelfe-love, many a contradiction, feare and hope muſt come in his way, who arrives at heaven; onely this is the comfort: No enemy ſhall finally deprive ſuch of their labour as are called to the hope of ſalvation unfeignedly. Nay rather, if thou get thither more eaſily, feare that there may be in thee many an old dreg which perhaps is purged out of others by ſad medicines, but how ever judge them not: The end ſhall make all manifeſt, judge not another mans ſervant, he ſtands or falls to his owne Maſter. Pitty ſuch rather, and pray that God would eaſe their travell.

Rom. 14. 13.

1 Cor. 4. 5.

And ſecondly, much leſſe condemne thy ſelfe, becauſe thou findeſt the worke of grace to hang long in ſuſpence and not to come off with ſuch eaſe and haſte as thou deſireſt: Doe not entertaine baſe feares into thy heart, nor tempt God by putting thy ſelfe amongſt hypocrites, and reading thine owne doome; looke to thoſe markes I ſet downe, and then conclude, its not in thee, but in the Lord to ſhorten thy travell, and to determine thy warfare; it is his work, who can neither be ſhortned, nor haſtned by thee; he onely knowes what corruption muſt be tamed, what grace quickned; hurt it ſhall doe thee none to be tried, if thou be ſure the worke was not of thine owne beginning, but Gods, know he is faithfull who hath begun, who alſo will finiſh in due time. Thou wouldeſt be loth thy wife ſhould come before her time, as much as thou longeſt for the fruit of her wombe; but art deſirous ſhe ſhould fulfill it: And thou doſt well: Doe ſo here in thy owne caſe: A thouſand yeares is as one day with the Lord; to teach thee ſome of his patience; when his day is come it will ſeeme no whit too long: And in the meane ſeaſon, who upholds thee from ſinking? Is it not the Lord? But perhaps thou wilt ſay, Thou feeleſt but ſmall hope, and much ſadneſſe and deadneſſe of ſpirit! I anſwer thee, That may be thy diſcontent and impatience: For why? Although thou feeleſt no thrivings, yet perhaps thou maieſt thrive and grow nearer thy hopes then thou art aware. The infant growes towards birth daily whether it be ſtrong or weake. None of Gods coſt ſhall bee loſt upon his, no drop of his pretious ſeed can be ſpilt: Though thy courſe ſeeme dead to thee, yet if the Lord attend thy fruit within, and ripen it, forme and faſhion it in thy heart by ſecret and unknowne degrees, is it not well? Thou doſt not know how one bone or one joint is framed in the wombe, yet they loſe no day, no houre of their appointed time: Thou ſeeſt no haires bredth of growing in thy corne, yet it encreaſeth daily; and even that winter life thereof which ſtands at a ſtay, and ſeems dead, yet gathers ſecret heart and ſtrength at the roote, which after in the ſpring makes it ſhoot and branch forth. The Lord is now doing for thee that which thou knoweſt not of, but ſhalt know hereafter: That is, that grace cannot be wrought out with thy ſweat and care, but by his ſpirit, and he is the Soveraigne God who will be adored by all that come to beleeve: They muſt come to a low point in themſelves, and confeſſe that God hath them at the advantage to ſave or deſtroy, which when it hath tamed them throughly under this mighty hand of his to be at his diſpoſe; then perhaps he will not take but releaſe the vantage for the glory of his Grace; yea truly, although the Lord ſhould reſpit his worke till thy death

2 Pet. 2.

Simil.

Joh. 10. 9.

3. Branch. Inſtruction. Chriſtians muſt beware of condemning themſelves.

Eſay 40. 2.

2Kings

death, yet mutter not, but know, that he chuſes that time, becauſe then commonly, the ſoule is brought to the narroweſt point, and ſees no props to ſupport her, nor helpes to cling to; then being at the greateſt ſtrait either to truſt to a promiſe or to periſh, it is put to it and forced to reſigne all, and to caſt it ſelfe upon meer mercy; which (while ſhee walked at large in the world) with many falſe props about her, ſhee found it not ſo eaſie to doe. Thus much for this Uſe.

Vſe 2. Reproofe and Confutation.

This ſweet Doctrine in the ſecond place ſerves to reprove and confute the falſe imputation of many cavilling and ſlanderous ſpirits, in their backbiting the Miniſters of the Goſpell, aud contrarily for the encouraging of the Miniſter in his courſe of painfull perſiſting in the worke of perſwaſion.

Quarrellers againſt the Miniſters unableneſſe to comfort the diſtreſſed, moſt ſinfull.

For the firſt of theſe: There be many prophane ones of this ſort in all places, who caſt reproach upon the Goſpell and Miniſtery, as unable to effect that which it pretends. Oh ſay they! when theſe Miniſters firſt preach the Law, they beare people in hands, that it is the way to raiſe up their ſoules to hope; but for ought we ſee, ſuch dejected ſpirits complaine every day that their condition is more and more heavy, they ſee themſelves further off then ever! I had rather be as I was (ſaith another) for before I was quiet, but now I ſee the gulfe in which I lye to be deep and terrible! But oh poore wretch! Is it thus with all? Are not ſome daily raiſed (through mercy) as well as others caſt down? What? Doſt thou expect as ſoone a lifting up, as thou feeleſt a conſternation? Art thou better then he that ſaid, He would hearken what the Lord would ſay, for he would ſpeake peace to his Saints? Surely its to bee feared, thine humbling is but violent, and then thou maieſt cavill long enough, for thou ſhalt revolt quickly to thine old vomit. Gods matters are too hot, and too heavy for thee. But ſay thou art no ſuch; yet tell me, Are the conſolations of God ſuch vaine things with thee? Is it not more eligible to be under the hands of a mercifull God (who in his good time can perſwade the unconvinced ſpirit, and bring it to the bent of his bow) then to be under that bondage for a time, which the Law by ſin hath brought upon thee? The like ſpeeches doe many uſe concerning others. How doe baſe parents, husbands, wives and kindred cry out of the word, when it hath begunne to ceaze upon their children, wives and husbands or kinsfolke? Oh (they ſay) its pitty ſuch Miniſters ſhould live; they ſerve for no other, ſave to gaſter and unſetle men who are in peace! They have done that with their words, which all their labour with both hands cannot undoe againe. Oh wofull wretch! Is the Miniſter able to goe beyond the Lord? Is he not a ſervant of God to doe what he will uſe him for? Shall the axe exalt it ſelfe againſt him that cutteth therewith? Or the clay ſay to the Potter, why doſt thou make no more haſte to faſhion me? No, its enough that he ſhall heale whom he hath wounded, and make up the breach he hath made when God will uſe him. In the meane time, perhaps thy cavilling at the meanes bindes Gods hand behinde him; thou needeſt not wonder that he doth thy wife or child ſo little good! rather ceaſe thy rebelling (as bootleſſe) and yeeld thy ſelfe to come into Gods order, that he may worke upon thy heart as he hath done theirs.

Pſal.85.8.

Job 15.11.

Eſay 10.15. Rom.9.

And

Vſe 3. Encouragement to the Miniſters of God. Ezek. 14.9. Rom. 3.7.

And ſo let it (by the way) encourage the Miniſter of God who pleads for the glory of God, and travells with a ſoule burthened, and deſpairing of ever ſeeing good day! Oh Lord (ſaith many a ſuch one) it is for thee that I have ſo urged the conſcience of my hearer to truſt upon thy accompliſhment of thy word! If I have deceived the people, thou haſt deceived me! Oh if I ſhould leave any poore ſoule in the briars, and never ſee the worke of faith finiſht in him, I ſhould be accounted a liar for God! what a diſhonour were this? Lord put to thine hand, helpe thy weake ſervant, ſave thine owne name and my credit! Diſable me not from being beleeved, leave me not a reproach to vile ones! Alas! They whom I have to deale with, are a ſturdy and a rebellious people, cavillers, and ſuch as will diſgrace me, if thy word ſhould not prove true; honour me therefore, and ſet thy ſeale to my poore labours, that in my truth thy name may be glorified; batter and pull down their high ſtomacks, plunge them into horrors, and then create the fruit of the lips in them, and ſtrengthen me to be an able Miniſter of reconciliation, that ſo the mouthes of them who would traduce thy Meſſengers and Ordinances may bee ſtopped. Even as the Lord Jeſus, Joh. 17. praied his Father to glorifie him for the ſake of them whom he had given him, ſo doe thou entreat alſo: Oh in thy weldoing be not diſcouraged by ſuch, nor be too ſollicitous for God! feare not, he will not give his glory to another, he will not be laught at as unable to goe through that which he hath begunne! Theſe poore ſervants of *Naaman* were weake inſtruments to ſpeake of, but yet made ſtrong enough by the Lord to conquer their Maſter; ſo thou ſhalt perhaps be the inſtrument to water that which others have planted: And what if others enter into thine? If God may have a Temple built by *Salomon*, *David* will lay in Timber and Cedars, and willingly forgoe the name thereof. And therefore diſtruſt not God, nor faint in thy ſervice.

2 Cor. 10.4. Eſay 57.18.

Eſay 42.8.

Gal. 2.

2 Chron. 28. 14.

Vſe 3. Admonition. Cleere and juſtifie God in his delay of grace.

Thirdly, let this be uſe of Admonition to us, that ſince God hath ſaid it, He will not alway contend, but create peace; therefore wee judge not amiſſe of God when we ſee the worke deferred, as if he did deſerve the blame; but rather cleer him, and ſay, He cannot lie; the fault lyes ſome where elſe: The truth is, we heare of few who honour God in the improvement of this promiſe; (though it be not the fault of all, for many doe beare witneſſe to God in this kinde:) But why? Becauſe they wilfully make it a long journey which God makes ſhort: And firſt they will not confeſſe that which God hath done: They think faith to be ſuch a ſenſible, effectuall grace that none can have it, but by and by they ſhall ſee the flame of it; and ſo not diſcerning any excellency of effects, they conſult with their owne feelings, and conclude, there is nothing at all: Alas poore ſoules! the beginnings of faith are poore, though the encreaſes may be great: Spirituall things in a carnall ſubject are as hardly diſcerned, as a pearle among much dung; that which is our owne, appeares eaſily and diſmaies us: But that which is Gods is more ſecret. Againe, many looke more at their owne ſtirrings of the poole then at Gods. I can ſpeak it by experience, that whereas one hath made complaint of his not claſping to a promiſe, and mourned ſimply for unbeleefe, ten have bemoaned their loſſe of the affections which

Job 8.7.

2 Kings

which they have had in hearing, praier or conference: A ſigne that their owne is nearer then Gods worke with them. Faith is not alway a victorious ſenſible and reflecting grace upon the ſoule wherein it is: But a caſting of her ſelfe (after all her fruitleſſe wraſtlings, as being convinced of the inſufficiency and invalidity of them all) upon the ſtreame of the word to carry her to the haven of peace. If then you have loſt your firſt feelings and zeale, give not God over, but ſtill ſeek him for a further ſpirit of recovery, and encreaſe upon the beſt grounds. *Naaman* here had loſt his firſt hopes, yet you ſee he recovers them againe by better inſight and perſwaſion, and that ere he looked for it. Pray earneſtly, O Lord, thou haſt power to ſet the Sunne ten degrees backe: Lord ſet mine ten degrees forward: Thou oh Lord haſt all inſtruments, meanes, ſeaſons, perſwaſions, bleſſings, croſſes in thy hand to worke by; apply them Lord, and ſuffer not my ſoule which is ſunke into giddineſſe, eaſe, worldlineſſe, diſcontent of ſpirit, and dead ſullenneſſe to lye ſtill in that dungeon. Drive me out of my carnall tracke, into thy Royall Rode, and if I muſt be delaid, yet keepe me in thy way; preſſe the Lord with his owne word, and ſay, Thou canſt diſcover to me all my ſteppings out of thy way, all my ſtops and lets: Thou canſt uncharme Satans ſpell: Thou canſt multiply perſwaſion and weaken diſſwaſion: Thou canſt remove that utter unwillingneſſe and uncouthneſſe of the ſoule to this work, and cauſe lythneſſe and complying therewith: Thou canſt pull me out of thoſe ſnares which enwrapt me in bondage, as the weeds did *Ionah*: No rocks ſhall ſplit me with feare, no Syrens ſhall inchant me with baites if thou aſſiſt: Thou canſt menage thy Spirit with ſo ſtrong an arme, that it ſhall proſper to doe what thou wilt, and cauſe that no raine, no ſnow ſhall returne in vaine, but doe that for which thou ſenteſt it. Take heed, give not God over, trifle not out thy time; improve faſting to caſt out the Prince of Divells Unbeleefe, and frequent the Sacrament as Gods ſealing Ordinance, and then know, that he who hath begunne will finiſh, except thou bee out of the way when the houre of performance is come.

Eſay 55.8.9.

Vſe 4. Conſolation to all who have found God in their converſion.

But laſtly, and above all, hearken to this all you to whom of right the Doctrine belongs; you who have long waited for this day, behold it here, even the day ſtarre of conſolation ariſing in you hearts, 2 Pet.1.19. I dare ſay for you, you doe not gape after comfort to ſpend it upon your luſts, but to heare what God will ſay, That you returne no more to folly, to your old diſtempers: To you I apply this bleſſed truth, to you I ſay, whoſe big hearts are come downe, and lye at the foot-ſtoole of mercy, and marke what I ſay, Come out of your aſhes, take unto you this white garment of joy and put it on, your warfare is accompliſhed: Oh that this day might be the time of your lifting up! (perhaps it may for ought I know) take this handkercheife and wipe away all your teares with it; let this Sun beame of comfort chaſe away all former miſts and fogs of darkeneſſe and diſtruſt, and let it be as old *Eli*, a voice from God to your ſad ſpirits, that (with *Hanna*) having received your anſwer you may be heavy no more: Set up your altar with *Samuel*, and ſay, Hitherto the Lord hath holpen us, and adde moreover, he will give me the hand and helpe me over the hill of difficulties that

1 Sam.1.17. 1 Sam.7.12.

that remaine. Be ſo farre from diſtruſting this, that you proceed and ſay; He that hath thus fulfilled his word in one kinde, he will doe it in all other, ſet me beyond gun-ſhot of all corruptions, temptations, Divell, oppoſition and malice of his inſtruments, and keep mee till his comming, and till I obtain full redemption. Rather then the Lord would not accompliſh that promiſe which was 4000. yeares old, of ſending the Lord Jeſus, hee would even ſtrip himſelfe and bee made ſinne and ſhame of holineſſe and honour. Did hee ſo deny himſelfe, and all to keep that maine promiſe, and dare I diſtruſt him in the reſt and the ſmaller? No ſurely. Therefore, poore ſoule, that thou mayſt be eſtabliſhed, come in, and believe this maine one: The night is paſt, and the houre of darkneſſe is gone. Now the Almond tree bloſſomes, and all the ſad diſaſters of the Winter are paſſed. Now in this Garden of God come meet thy beloved, and let him give thee his love. Henceforth ſay, O my ſoule, thou haſt marched valiantly: Thou art above all thy former feares and ſorrowes: Thou wert afraid leſt death ſhould prevent thee ere this day; but that was impoſſible: for then Gods word had been of no effect. Say thus, Now me thinkes, in the comfort of this truth, I could leap over a wall: Oh that I ſhould ſee it no ſooner! Now the time of God is come, it is ſo cleare, that I wonder I ſhould ever ſtagger or diſtruſt it: I ſee it muſt bee wholly ſpun out of the Promiſe, and not out of mine owne Bowels. Surely God was in this truth heretofore, and yet till now I was never aware of it. Now I am, now I bleſſe God that ever I lived to this day, that God ſhould in ſuch a comfortleſſe world, reveale ſuch glad tidings unto me, and make me to ſee his ſalvation. Oft have I heard of him with mine eare, but now I ſee him with mine eyes. Now I can ſay, That which I have long ſought, I have found, I have found him whom my ſoule loveth.

Galat. 4. 4

Cant. 2. 11, 12.

Gen. 28. 16.

Job. 42. 3, 4.

Why ſhouldſt thou not ſay thus? Why doth thy ſpirit fret within thee, & why art thou ſo ſad, when the Lord hath given thee the oyle of gladnes? Doeſt thou not know that it hath been the portion of ſundry Saints of God before thee? Oh then climbe not up to heaven, nor go downe into the deep to fetch Chriſt: Thou ſhalt not need. This day is come, thy accepted time: The promiſe is neere thee, even in thy heart to beleeve it. As the Angell ſaid to *Peter*, Ariſe and follow me: ſo doe thou, and ſay, Now of a truth I ſee the Lord hath indeed delivered me from *Herod* and the Jewes. How went that Eunuch away from *Philip* rejoycing? What made *Glover* to ſpeake when hee ſaw that Chariot of fire to carry him to heaven? Oh! hee is come, hee is come. And another at the ſtake, to take her leave not onely of her Husband, Children and Countrey, but of Faith and Hope, ſaying, Farewell you, and welcome Love. What a triumphant ſpeech was it? Another, whoſe tendernes over her children had not been ordinary, and her feares great, being very ſicke, to cry out, I take no thought for them, I leave them to my God: and as for my diſtempers and temptations, I have none, I know I ſhall bee ſaved. Another fearing hee ſhould live in a great ſickneſſe, asked, Doe you thinke I ſhould ever keep this aſſurance, till another ſickneſſe and death come? He was anſwered

Pſal. 43. 5.

Rom. 10.

Acts 12. 6.

Acts 8. end.

Speciall examples of ſoules deeply & long loden, yet at length comforted.

2 Kings

ſwered, Yes: and ſo foure yeares after at death, he lay as before, rapt and raviſht above world and all: and being asked how he did, ſaid: I am new out of a Trance, I have had a doore opened, and ſeene the glory of God, and now the doore is clapt to, but I peep at the crevis, to keep the ſight of it, how loath am I to forgoe it? To conclude, another poore creature, very weake to hold any thing all her life, yet moſt conſtant in meanes till death, when all thought her neere gone, bade them weep no more for her, nor take no thought, for ſhee knew ſhee ſhould doe well. Oh the faith of theſe, and hundreds more wee have ſeene, and all to evidence this truth. Oh! let us tread in their ſteps, and follow their converſation; and when thine end ſhall come, Chriſt ſhall but ſtoop down, and write upon thy heart 2 or 3 words, Bee of good comfort, thy ſinnes are forgiven, but all thine accuſers ſhall goe away, and thy ſelf be acquitted for ever. Oh be thankfull to think of it, and let no ſtranger, world or luſts, enter into this thy joy to defile it. Thus much for this fourth and laſt uſe, and for this doctrine. Now I haſten to the next.

Joh.8.6.

Doctrine.
True humilitie ſcornes not to learne of the meaneſt,

And having ended the time when he obeyed, we come now to the obedience it ſelfe: Hee went downe and waſhed himſelfe in Jorden. Wherein although the main thing which I intend, is the Act of his faith, yet one thing I muſt tell you of firſt, *viz.* an amplifying of it, by his humility, that he was thus ſubdued by his ſervants, and glad to yeeld at their inſtance & counſell, though their Maſter a great Prince. An unuſuall and unlikely thing, that ſuch a favourite to his Prince as hee was, and ſo great a Warriour, ſhould now bee ſubdued by a few followers, who had ſo ſtouted it out with the Prophet himſelfe. But as the Lord uſed this courſe to abaſe his pride: ſo hee effected that which hee ſought, and now makes him a tame Captive to meane Conquerours. The poynt then is, An humble heart will not ſcorne the counſell and help of the meaneſt. The proud give great words, and ſcorne meane ones, thinking it a diſgrace to be dealt with by ſuch. But it muſt be a poore thing indeed which an humble ſoule will deſpiſe in the way of God, and his ſouls welfare. This is that which *Paul* Rom. 12. urgeth at the hands of Chriſtians, That they condiſcend to them low degree, and thinke themſelves equall unto them. And yet ſee how *Apollo* that learned and eloquent man, diſdain'd not to learne the way of God more perfectly even from *Aquila* and *Priſcilla*, Tent-makers. See how *Paul* conſorts himſelfe with young *Timothy*, and calles him his fellow-labourer, how honourably hee ſpeakes of private men, and craves the prayers of poore Chriſtians. Our Lord Jeſus, how did hee in his agony, ſeek the help and prayers of poore ſleepy Diſciples? But I will adde a few reaſons.

Rom.12. 13.

Acts 18.26.

1 Theſſ.1.2.

Matth.26.37.

Reaſon 1.

Firſt, it muſt be ſo, becauſe humblenes is a reall grace, and diſcerns between ſhadowes and ſubſtance, and eſteemes it ſelfe not by the latter, but the former. A fooles eyes are bleared with any thing, that hee is better bred, hath more money in his purſe, hath a braver ſtomacke then his fellow: nay, if he have a little more gold in his Hat-band, or a longer lock of haire at his eares, then another. But he that hath grace is purged from ſuch ſcurfe of vanity, hee knowes that God eſteemes

no

no ſuch ſtuffe, but judges by the inner man, and the vertues of the ſoule, which if an inferiour doe excell him in, he neither deſpiſes him for his meanneſſe, nor exalts himſelfe for his complements. Both are of one ſeed, one fleſh, from one maker, tending to the ſame death and duſt. Counters in a ſumme differ not, ſave in opinion, although the one ſtand for an hundred pound, the other but an half-peny. Acts 17.26.

Secondly, by this equalling himſelfe to a lower degree, an humble man ſhewes the ſoundneſſe of his humility. Many will ſeem humble enough among their Peeres and equals, though their hearts be proud, becauſe all colours of pride are removed. But hee who is humble to the meane, hath caſt off all covers of ſhame, and pretexts of pride, and ſhewes himſelf to be truly humble indeed, becauſe he might be proud under a defence. Each grace of God covets to expreſſe it ſelfe in her naked hue, without hypocriſie: and ſo humility abhorres all contrariety to her ſelfe, not onely open ſcorne and bluſtering, but even that ſecret queaſineſſe and coyneſſe of heart, which is (as I may ſay) the relique and ſtaine of corruption in this kinde. *Reaſon* 2.

Thirdly, by this meanes it concurres with Gods wiſedome, and ſtoops to his Arguments. For the Lord himſelfe to humble proud man, ſends him to the moſt baſe and contemptible creature, and doth oftentimes arme it to foyle mans pride. Now then to diſdain a meane one, being in the image of God as wel as thy ſelf, how inſolent a pride were it both againſt Man and God himſelfe? But to hearken to the meaneſt, is to learne humbleneſſe of our Father, who ſends us to that Schoole for the purpoſe, that he might tame us. Goe thou ſluggard to the Piſmire. *Reaſon* 3. Prov. 6. 6.

Fourthly, by this meanes we imitate the Lord himſelfe, who hath abaſed himſelfe even to the loweſt degree of baſeneſſe in this kinde, emptying himſelf that hee might bee equall to them of greateſt baſeneſſe: nay more, might be baſer then thouſands of them, who yet had been extreamly baſe, if he had been the ſonne of an Empreſſe. So the Lord himſelfe, Eſay 57.17. though that holy one and inhabiting eternity, yet lookes downe upon the poore and lowly, that he might dwell with them and be ſtrong with them. *Reaſon* 4. Philip. 2 8.

The uſe (to be briefe) is firſt, to all inferiours, either Miniſters or others in inferiour place, not to withdraw their ſervice in this kind from their ſuperiours: I ſay, when God calles them to adviſe, rebuke, exhort, not to pull back their neck out of the Collar, through indirect and ſiniſter conceits. It is the ſinne of the inferiour, and the miſery of the ſuperiour, to be ſo handled. I aſcribe the horrible debauchednes of great ones at this day, and their ſinfull unlimited courſes, (next to their owne natures) to the deſperate baſeneſſe of ſuch, as being ſet in place of Miniſtery or attendance, neglect their duty toward ſuch, being eye-witneſſe of their ſinne. What, ſaith one, ſhall I, one of the puny Chaplaines, ſpeake to my Patrone, or great Lord, of his uncleane courſes? then hee might caſt my boldneſſe in my teeth, when ancienter, learneder, wiſer, and more experienced, feare his diſpleaſure, diſtruſt their owne ſtrength, ſhall I begin? Truly, the very ſervants of Heathen great ones, ſhall riſe up againſt ſuch, as ſtay not their *Vſe* 1. Inferiors muſt not pull backe their ſervice from their betters if God call them.

2 Kings

Maſters in their riots, but connive and correſpond with them: *Alexander* himſelf had one lover of *Alexander*, though moſt were lovers of the King. And are we onely lovers of mens greatneſſe for our owne ends, and not of their ſoules? So men that have others but a little above them in place, Miniſters having Gentlemen in their Townes, dare not ſpeake for feare of them, I ſhall doe them no good, and my ſelfe much hurt, ſay they, by ſpeaking: and ſo, for lack of the ſervice, they ſhall rot in their ſinne. For why? Firſt, why ſhouldſt thou diſtruſt God? If thy heart be not falſe, cannot that God, who hath given thee a wiſe and loving tongue to reproove, give him alſo a wiſe and inclining eare to heare? When *Moſes* anſwered the Lord, Send whom thou ſhouldſt to *Pharaoh*, for I am a man of a ſtammering tongue: doth not *God* anſwer him, Who made the tongue, or ear? have not I? Cannot I give thee gifts for mine owne worke, and him the grace of hearkning? But put caſe wee prevaile not. No more did *Ieremy*, whoſe face yet God made as braſſe, to ſpeake to a rebellious houſe: But then, ſaith God, thou haſt ſaved thy ſoule, their bloud ſhall reſt upon their owne head. So then (to end this) doe thou thy duty, O inferiour, and truſt God for ſucceſſe. If *Naamans* ſervants had now neglected their duty, what had become of their Maſter? Be encouraged by their ſucceſſe.

Perſwaſions to it.

Exod. 4. 12.

Jerem. 1. 18.

vſe 2. Admonition.

Secondly, this is admonition to all ſorts, to lay aſide that pride and prejudice, that coyneſſe and ſtatelineſſe of ſpirit, which fore-ſtalles it from learning of the meane, and inferours. It is the phraſe of proud *Ajax* in the Poet: He that encounters me, let him thinke himſelfe honoured that I will vouchſafe to foyle him. Some are of ſo arrogant ſpirits, that they ſcorne to receive a good turne from their inferiour. But, O proud foole! who art thou? Mayſt not thou dye in thy neſt for want of a meane helper? As once a great woman did, who ſcorning the poor; at the laſt, being in her country houſe, ſmitten with the plague, was forſaken of all: and then cried out, that God was juſt. I obſerve, that it is the honour of brave Souldiers, that when they are beaten almoſt out of their Caſtle, yet they will capitulate for their honour to goe out of their harbour, with their pikes traild, their match light, and in array, or elſe they will dye ere they ſtirre. That bravery is in moſt men, they will loſe their lives ere they loſe their great ſtomacke. I confeſſe, in civill caſes there is ſome reaſon in ſuch things. *Alexander* is commended, that being chalenged by a meane fellow to run at Tilt with him, hee ſcorn'd it, and ſayd, Kings muſt runne with none but Kings: for they can get no credit by victory, but loſe much by being foyled. But in matters of God it is otherwiſe. Be willing to be taught, reproved by any, be they never ſo meane: if there be grace, be there never ſuch infirmities and contemptibleneſſe. It is a good Motto which he gave: Not alwayes there is good in the great, but alway there is great in the good. Let the honour of the grace, and the pretiouſneſſe of a Chriſtian, cover his outwards, and diſcerne that which is within at a narrow crevis. Be not of this minde, I will heare none ſave the greateſt Doctor, and learnedeſt man in the Countrey, ſuch or ſuch a man of fame and note: As for theſe ordinary Preachers,

I ſlight them. Thoſe whom thou admireſt, are unwilling to take the paines, and thoſe who take the paines thou art unwilling to heare: and ſo between both, a proud heart bringeth to deſtruction. That Heathen King *Eglon*, when as *Ehud* a lame man, came to him, and told him, he had a meſſage from God, aroſe off his Throne, and came downe to ſpeake with him. In baſe and common things wee diſdaine not the baſeſt: Gentlemen will be haile fellow well met with baſe Jeſters, ſwearing Falconers, or hang-byes, if for their ends, and Ladies will ſend their children to dance or ſing, or to learn faſhions of baſe peaſants, and not diſdaine it. But to learne of a good man or woman, the trade of God, to heare any thing from them which might rectifie either their hearts or manners, they deſpiſe it exceedingly. Shall not their own practice confute them wofully? If Religion were any of their ends, would they not do as much, & abaſe themſelves as low for that, as for the learning of prick-ſong, or the like? And whereas thou wilt ſay, I will not doe ſo meane a fellow ſuch honour, as to ſubdue my ſpirit, or put my neck under his girdle. I anſwer thee, Looke thou at God, not at him: but if this defeat thee of cure, thank thy ſelfe: hee is but very little hungry, or thirſty, who will not doe a ſtone or leather pot or veſſell the honour to quench his thirſt; nor eate any meate, except out of plate, with a ſilver forke. They that will not honour others ſo much as to learne of them, muſt be content to ſhame themſelves ſo much as to periſh. Oh young man! ſee thy face in a glaſſe, how is ſage *Salomon* faine to flatter him, and to ſay, My ſonne, heare inſtruction, let thine eare hearken to my counſell. And all becauſe a proud heart is wonderouſly averſe from the counſell even of our betters, yea of a King ſpeaking for God: How much more hard then to harken to meane perſons, when we are great? Alas! this is growne out of the world: yet *Naaman* had been a Leper but for meane ones. It were better that the Lord did abaſe thee very low with ſome great croſſe, to pull downe thine haughty heart, then ſuffer thy pride to uſher thy deſtruction. When *Darius* was purſued hard by enemies, and very dry and thirſty, he ſaw a puddle with a little water in it, and having drank it, ſaid, he never taſted ſweeter in all his life. So ſhould the counſell of the meaneſt be to thee, if ſtung in conſcience, or lying upon thy death bed. But if thou deſpiſe them before, who knowes whether God will ſo farre honour thee then?

2 Kings

Judg. 3. 20.

Note.

Prov. 4. 1. 2.

Vſe 3. Examination.

Thirdly, let this be examination and triall of thee, whether in truth God have humbled thee or no: & whether ever thou couldeſt diſcern aright between the pretious and the vile, and both loath the greateſt, if baſe, and honour the perſons of the meaneſt, and their counſell, if really good. *David* could abaſe himſelfe thus, even to hearken after the meaneſt, and to make them of his houſe, Pſal. 101. And poore *Abigail* was pretious to him, and her counſell bleſſed, though hee were heire apparant of a Crowne. Let us note this: for even in Religious perſons, this ſecret tang of baſeneſſe may lurke, as wee ſee in St. *Iames*, who brings in rich Chriſtians deſpiſing the poorer: You ſay to them who have rings upon their fingers, Come up hither; but to the other, Sit at my foot-ſtoole. A ſigne that this baſe corruption is very cloſely

1 Sam. 25.

James 2. 3.

2 Kings

lodged in us, to underprize goodneſſe and counſell, becauſe it dwells meanly. A poore man was forgotten, though wiſe, ſaith *Salomon*, and one that delivered the Citie by his wiſedome. If thou doeſt ſo highly eſteeme grace, as to take it out of the pooreſt creature with a thankfull heart, (for as he ſaid of Miniſters, that they were goldeneſt when the Chalices were of Wood; ſo I ſay, the man may have a Pearle in his boſome, when he weares but a bare coat) it is a ſigne of ſome humility.

Eccleſ 9.15.

Laſtly, let it be exhortation to us, to beare humble mindes, and lowly ſpirits, not to diſdaine to learne of the meaneſt: Nay, let us bee thus vile, and if the world thinke us ſo, let us bee more vile; let us learne of the Piſmire, and the Lamb, and the Storke, and the Swallow, and the Lillies, yea the graſſe: for we are very ignorant, even as the Horſe & the Mule, and had need to be ſet to School to all Maſters, and yet learne but little. The very bird that lives in a Cage foure inches ſquare, being naturally bred to flye abroad in the open Coaſt, ſhould teach us ſelf-deniall & contentment: ſhe can ſing and make her priſon a Paradiſe; our baſe hearts diſdain to be content or thankfull, when as we abound in all mercies, & have the world at will. An whole Councell once condeſcended to the judgement of one *Paphnutius*, a meane perſon, ſpeaking from God; chuſing rather to hearken to a mean perſon, then to perſiſt in their errour. If ſo many learned Biſhops, ſage and ancient perſons, diſdained not to learne of ſo poore a counſellour, what ſhould ſuch as wee doe, who are yet as much more ſtout then they, as they were wiſer then wee are? And ſo much for this poynt.

Eſay 1. Pſa.32.8.9.

Doct. Another poynt offers it ſelfe from hence alſo, and that from the order of his obeying: The Text telles us, *Then hee went and dipped himſelfe.* When, I pray you? Surely, when his ſtomack was brought down, and ſunk in him, then hee went & dipped himſelfe in Jorden; when that which all this while letted, was removed, then did he obey, believe, and doe as he was bidden, and that in a moment. The poynt is very ſpeciall to prepare us to the poynt following: for it acquaints us with a main barre and ſtop which lies in the Preachers way, and the Spirits way, to wit, a rebellious and ſelfe-conceited heart: and with that which makes eaſie, and ſweet, that is, an heart convinced, and yeelding to the Word. No man, I ſuppoſe, will expect me to be large in much opening of this diſeaſe: for I have ſpent many Sermons in the handling of Self, Self-love, carnall Reaſon, Rebellion, and coy Pride in *Naaman*, when I went over the 11. verſe. Now I take all that for granted, and from the iſſue of the Lords working thus long upon *Naaman*, & his humbling of him to the command, compared with the effect of his obeying, I would preſent unto your eye, this poynt, That alway when the Lord means to create faith in the ſoule, he doth immediatly put an end to all that ſtoutneſſe of ſpirit that hindred the ſame. The poynt is cleare: No ſooner had the Lord emptied *Naaman* here of his oppoſing heart, but immediatly followes his obeying the charge. So true is that golden ſpeech of *Ieremy*, I heard Ephraim bemoaning himſelfe: Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed, as an Heyfer unaccuſtomed

Humility alway goes before grace.

Jer. 31.18.19.

cuſtomed to the yoke: Surely, after that I was turned, I repented, and after I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh, I was aſhamed and confounded, becauſe I did beare the ſhame of my youth. The ſumme of the words is, That all the while that *Ephraim* was proud and wilfull, no grace would enter into him: But as ſoone as the Lord thawed his ſpirit, and made him humble, lo, hee preſently ſubmitted, and bare Gods yoke with meekneſſe and obedience. Prophets there were before, who did beat upon him, and tozed him with rebukes and terrors: but alas! they were but as the blowes of the Smith upon his Anvill, which is the more hardned. But at laſt God caſt into his heart, a ſecret thought of his long rebellion, and how little good it had done him; then by and by hee liſtned, and ſmote upon his thigh and repented. Even ſo, all the day long (ſayth the Lord by *Eſay*, Chap. 52.)ult. have I ſtretched out mine arme to a people in vaine. None hath beleeved my report, the word of God is revealed to none. Why? Hee addes, becauſe it is a ſtiff-necked and a gain-ſaying people: q. d. But for this, they had beleeved long agoe. This is that which elſewhere the Prophet foretels under the Goſpell, that ſuch as ſhould bee converted unto God, ſhould turne their Swords into Mattockes, and their Speares into Sythes, that is, of warlicke and turbulent ones, become peaceable Husband-men and Inhabitants. The Aſpe ſhall ſuffer the young childe to play at the hole of the Aſpe: and the Lyon ſhall feed with the Lamb, and the Beare with the Bullocke; meaning, the ſavage and wilde diſpoſitions of men, ſhould turn meek and tractable. *Iob* in one place brings in the Lord asking this queſtion, Wilt thou tye the Unicorne to the furrow? or wilt thou make the wilde Aſſe feed at thy Crib? q. d. No, their nature is unbroken; thy Oxe and thy Horſe are fitteſt for that, whom thou haſt tamed to the worke. Even ſo, aſſure thy ſelfe, the Divell and Chriſt, Light and Darkneſſe, may as ſoon comply, as a ſtout rebellious heart and grace. Rebellion and Unbeliefe yoke together, ſo doe Selfe-deniall and meekneſſe of Spirit, with faith and obedience. As while the ſinewes of mans heart is of Iron, the Lords heaven is Braſſe: ſo when the ſoul begins to melt, the Lord begins to turne and convert it. It is with the ſoule in this kinde, contrary to that it was with them in Acts 27. If theſe goe out of the ſhip, it muſt needs miſcarry. But if pride and rebellion abide in the heart, no grace will grow, the man muſt periſh. *Ottomans* horſe (they ſayd) whereſoever he became, made the graſſe, that it could not grow: ſo doth a ſtout heart keep grace from the heart. There is a ſecret intelligence between hell and a proud ſpirit: And contrarily, there is an entercourſe between an humble heart and heaven. *Hoſee* in one place tells us, That the Lord would ſpeake to the heavens, and they ſhould heare the earth with rains: and then the earth ſhould heare man with fruits: So, firſt heaven muſt grant the heart tenderneſſe and relenting; and then that will heare the Lord commanding and promiſing. The windes being very loud, the aire is dry, but if they be downe, then preſently we have ſtore of raine: So is it here, when the tempeſts and ſtormes of the heart bee up, whether in morall ſinnes againſt the Law, or ſpirituall rebellion againſt the Goſpell,

2 Kings

Eſay 2.4.
Eſay 2.18.17.

Job. 39.9.

Hoſ. 2. 21.

See that, 1. King. 19.12.

2 Kings

pel, there is no obedience: but if they be downe never ſo little, the clouds will follow after raine; that is, faith and obedience will enſue, Prov.15. *ult.* The feare of the Lord is inſtruction and wiſedome. And before honour goeth humility. Whom ſhall I teach Doctrine? Eſay 28.7.8. Even him that is weaned from the Milke, and drawne from the Breaſts. The ſweet milke of the breaſts of Selfe and carnall Wiſedome, are alway oppoſite to the wiſedome of God. Sacrifices thou wouldeſt not; but an eare thou haſt boared. Why? That I might doe thy will, O God, who before did mine owne.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction. Why the moſt hearers are peſtered with unbeliefe. Becauſe the heart was never brought down.

For briefe uſe: Firſt, it is inſtruction to put us out of queſtion, why an heart of unbeliefe hath ſo long peſtered the moſt of our hearers, and why the Lords perſwaſions have ſo little prevailed to make us believe. Surely (if you doubt, as I feare few need to doe) the enemy is this wicked *Haman* of a rebellious heart. Perhaps ſome of you are of another minde, becauſe you can ſo colour and cruſt over this ſore with courteſie and good words: but the truth of it is, There is an heart within, big and high, and ſtout. This is the Camell which ſuffers not the ſoule to goe through the needles eye. Somewhat is the cauſe why the felon upon the hand ſwells: it is an humor which is not yet let out; if that were out, the felneſſe would ceaſe. Enquire and conſult, either a curſed heart will keep ſome baſe luſt, which God will have out, and there the Lord and it are upon debate: or there is a curſed naturall antipathy between the Lord and the way of ſalvation: or the ſoule is full of teches and pritches againſt reproofe: or, it hatcheth ſome falſe conceit, that it hath obeyd when it hath not, which it will not ſee: or puffes and ſnuffes againſt ſome other thing, the Miniſter, the Ordinance, the difficulty of Religion, the uncertainty of the promiſe: Whatſoever it be, it is a diſtaſtfulneſſe of heart, and a reſiſtance againſt God, which if it were not, the ſoule would nakedly come in, and obediently ſubmit to the Goſpel. But this diſeaſe hath this miſery, that the more dangerous it is, the leſſe it will bee convinced of ſuch a thing; and this nouriſhes the heart in her wretchedneſſe: it is not time alone which will heale it; rather it cauſes it to rankle, and wax worſe and worſe. Men aſcribe it to other matters, being willing to gull themſelves, becauſe they have no will to be rid of it: They ſay, they have weake memories, little capacity, and the Miniſter is too high for them. But in very deeds, their hearts are too high for him; till the Word come neerer, and worke inward, to caſt downe all imaginations and high things, no ſubmiſſion will follow to the obedience of Chriſt. The effect every one dare confeſſe, but the cauſe they will not ſee: it is not unprofitableneſſe, or an ill memory, that hath cauſed your hearts to be ſo ſurly and perverſe; but it is a proud and gainſaying heart, which hath ſo long made you unprofitable. Doe not lin till you are convinced hereof: for till the cauſe be ſeene, it cannot bee removed. Doe not lay the fault where it is not: doe not blanch over the cauſe with fine words, mitigate not the extremity of the ſin with gentleneſſe. Perhaps you doe not live in wrath and rage with your wives, family, neighbours, you make a ſhift to comply with men courteouſly, ſo long as no body hurts you: but truly, if you beleeve not,

2 Cor.10.4.

Acts 28. 27.

not, in all this while, there is a pad in the ſtraw, your ſpirits are not inwardly brought to that tender ſoftneſſe and ſelfe-deniall, to thinke equall thoughts of God and his way, ſomething ſtickes in your baſe ſtomackes, which will not ſuffer the word of God to goe downe, and pierce into you, to perſwade you. If you would but bethinke you what a great let this is, which hitherto you have not ſeene, or if you could thinke how the caſe would bee changed with you, if once a tractable comming and inclining heart were in you; how the Miniſters of God, the Angels, yea the Spirit of grace it ſelfe (which you have ſo long grieved and reſiſted) would rejoyce in the change: Oh! you would never lin with your owne ſoules till you had caſt it out; and having ſhaken it off, you would thinke it a greater eaſe then ever that Martyr of Chriſt did, when he had caſt off all his Popiſh traſh and furniture from his ſhoulders. B. Hooper.

Secondly, it is reproofe to many Profeſſors, who (in hope) are of the better ſort: who, although by this ſinne have not (perhaps) wholly ſtopped and choked the paſſages of the grace of converſion, yet by the dregges thereof remaining in them, and nouriſhed, dampe that obedience of heart, that life of faith, and ſelfe-deniall; yea that peace, joy, and open heart to God and goodneſſe, which elſe they might attaine. It is ſtrange how ſome Chriſtians dare give place to their corruption in this kinde: yea, grow to thinke it their praiſe. Some are ſowre and crabbed, (as it were) ſteeped in vinegar, ſo cenſorious and uncharitable, that none can eſcape their cenſure: ſome ſo ſuſpitious & jealous, that none can live by them: ſome ſo ſullen, that no eſtate can content them: ſome ſo ſelfe-loving, that none can pleaſe them, ſave they who humour them in all their paſſions and pangs: ſome ſo implacable, that if once offended, they can ſcarce looke a man in the face to rights: ſome ſo eager in revenge, that nothing elſe will content them: ſome alwayes ſtirring up debate betweene neighbours, ſo buſie in Law, and in matters of contention, as if they were Salamanders, alway living in the fire: others ſo eager in ſpirit, ſo lowring and ſad, that (though they breake not out with others, yet) they never agree with themſelves, nor walke with a cheerfull countenance. Why? Save that the ſweet oyle of gladneſſe hath not ſuppled them, nor the peace of God (which paſſeth underſtanding) hath poſſeſſed and ſtabliſhed them. Oh friends! How dare you dally, and venture to abide thus? How ſad a reflex will this bee upon your death-beds? You will ſay, It doth oft trouble you, and you are grieved for your waſpiſhneſſe and anger. But what then? Is that an amends to God, to vomit up that at an odde time, which afterward you doe returne to and licke up ugaine, without ſenſe or feeling? Oh! it were meet for you, to be ſo heart-ſick of it, that you might for ever abhor it. Chriſtians ſhould mark the ſecret creepings of ſuch poyſon, how it dogges them, chokes humbleneſſe and cheerfulneſſe in them, and makes them walke unfruitfully and unſetledly, from time to time. And, ſay that ſometimes you faſt and pray, and vow and covenant againſt them; yet if the corruption and your ſoules are ſo incorporated together, that when it ſteales in upon you with the old ſweetneſſe, it

Vſe 2. Reproofe.

Chriſtians of crabbed, peeviſh, ſtubborne hearts loſe the grace of faith.

2 Kings

it inchants you, and disables you from resistance, what cause of boasting have you? None surely, nor shall, till the Lord come between you and home, with the spirit of true remorce and sorrow for it, unto repentance never to be repented of: and till your beloved lust become your bane: till the Lord in secret chasten your spirits, that you can sit and bemoane your selves with *Ephraim*, and say: O Lord, what is the cause that I am so enthralled to this stout and unbroken heart! Alas! No word of thine, no patience of thine can enter, while this sin harden me. I am not fit to bee wrought upon by any crosse, blessing, meditation or ordinance. All washes away as it comes. Oh! shall I never be rid of this misery, this chaine? When, Lord will it once be? Who shall breake off the slavish custome of my heart this way, and set me at liberty? Oh! if once it may bee, I shall even account it as a second resurrection from the dead. Oh! set such a guard over mee, that I may never be surprized any more with it. Let mee thinke the Divell not farre off, when I see this messenger of his at my heeles, so to dogge and buffet me. Let thy Spirit from above, which is pure, peaceable, long-suffering, mercifull and patient, humble and loving, deliver me from this spirit of envie, sullennesse, Selfe and her fruits, most earthly, sensuall and Divellish. But as for nourishing this naughtinesse in your selves, and stifnesse in it, to keep your fashions, attires, to speake your owne words, as if no Lord should controll you: Oh! how horrible is it? Shall God beare your name, and be as your husband; but you will eate your owne bread, weare your owne cloath, and be at your own hand and finding (as those women in *Esay* speak?) Then surely you must bee content to live upon your own wages, and so lve downe in sorrow.

See and apply that in James 4.1,2,3.

Jam.3.15.

Esay 4.1.

Vse 3. Terror.

Thirdly, This is terror to all openly proud, scornfull and prophane persons, who proclaime their sinne as Sodome, whose hearts cast up mire and dirt like the raging Sea, Those carry themselves aloft, and live at the full height of a bigge and high heart, without any sense of their danger. Such as maintaine this rotten principle, It is good to be some body in the view of men; because as a man thinkes of himselfe, so will others thinke of us. Which as it is false (for God resists the proud, & crosses them) so what if it were true? Surely, so long as my doctrine continues good, there is no possibilitie for thee to obtaine grace and obedience while this spirit lasts. *Naaman* was a great one, & might as much stand upon it as thou: yet till his stomack came downe, the word of his cure was not beleeved, hee was a Leper still, so art thou, and worse in Gods sight, so long as thy lofty heart dwells in thee, thy high thoughts of thy selfe cause mean thoughts of God, contempt of his word, and disdaine to bee a captive to Gods truths. Nay, it takes away all capableness, judicious discerning, remembring, affecting, applying or practising of any thing thou heares, save to pride thy selfe in thy knowledge, and to strengthen thy selfe in a rotten peace. Alas! as the Prophet describes *Moab*, that she was very proud, shee had not beene rolled about, and therefore was setled upon her dregges, her sent still abode in her: so is it with every proud wretch, his own savour is in him still, he is as he was, as you leave him so you finde

Esay 57.21.

Jam.4.7.

Proud hearts terrified by Gods resisting.

Jerem.48.11. 29.

finde him, a proud wretch, rolling up and down upon his own hinges. As for ſuſpecting all is not well, or laying any thing to heart, hee is farre from it. No winde ſhakes his corne: he applauds himſelfe in his owne conceit, and ſaith, I ſhall have peace though I walke in the ſtubborneſſe of mine owne heart. Mark how careleſſe pride is. But what comes of it? Doth he meet with any grace in ſuch a condition. No, the Lord will ſet himſelfe againſt ſuch a ſturdy wretch, breake his iron ſinew, and the ſtaffe of his pride: the wrath of God ſhall ſmoke againſt him, and reſiſt him, till his heart feele it, and deſiſt from fighting againſt God. 2 Kings

Deut. 29. 15, 18

And ſurely, if ſuch finde ſmall favour with men, ſave from teeth outward, they finde much leſſe from God. Should not this ſcare every ſuch man out of himſelfe, ſaying, The more I magnifie my ſelfe, the more God vilifies me, I ſee it hard to curb pride, but it is harder to endure wrath, and to be caſt out from God, who counts none pretious but ſuch as count themſelves vile. Beware of it then, the ſin it ſelfe is ſad; but that it ſhould be the canker that ſhould eate out the foyſon of grace, and deſtroy all my hearings, and make my devotions as odious as the cutting off a dogges neck, Oh! this conſequence of the ſin, is worſe then the ſinne it ſelfe. Many ſinnes are worſe in their fruit then in themſelves, and this is one of them. And to touch the particular of *Naamans* ſinne here, which was bluſtering at the Prophet, and cavilling againſt his meſſage, we ſee here, how God abaſed this ſpirit in him ere ever he could obey. But when that was gone, then the other ſucceeded. And ſo I ſay to all proud cavillers, here is terror for them: While cavilling laſts, no grace enters. Looke upon this patterne all you cavillers, and ſee God branding you with a graceleſſe heart, as long as this humour laſts. I have noted the end of ſuch, as have vented their pride in cavilling and picking knots with the Miniſter and his doctrine: ſuch as cannot receive or ſtand under a ſolid and ſad truth, with a meek heart, and I never ſaw ſuch come to good; God hath betrayed them to ſhame and ill report: Their knowledge hath puft them up, They have ſome growne Alehouſe-Keepers and haunters, embraced the world, fallen out with their brethren, and forſaken their fellowſhip, been foully tainted with groſſe evils, uncleannes, the world, contention, cenſoriouſneſſe, uncharitableneſſe. Some have proved Browniſts, Poynters, Schiſmatickes and Libertines, and loſt their honour with God and his Church. If there bee any drop of humility in you, let this affright you, lay downe the bucklers, and as you have been proud, ſo now be humble. Say not with *Gardiner*, I revolted with *Peter*, but I have not repented with *Peter*: but with this poore Proſelyte *Naaman*, I have been as ſtout and proud as he, and now behold I repent and am humble as he: Lord give me grace as thou gaveſt him. Oh! the ſervants of *Naaman* had little cauſe to repent them of their counſell, when ſuch an effect followed: Neither ſhould I of mine, if I could prevaile as they did. God grant you and mee this grace.

The terror urged.

Vſe 4. Exhortation and comfort to humble ſoules.

The fourth and laſt uſe ſhall be exhortation to us all, to embrace this grace of a ſubject & humble ſpirit: Oh! it is the meſſenger of mercy, and

2 Kings

and mercy followes her at the heeles. Selfe-deniall and an humbled ſoule, are ſpeciall ingredients of this receit of Mercy, and faith to apply it. When the ſoule is full of her owne, it is empty of Gods: hee counts all grace put into ſuch a ſoule, as water put into a top-full veſſell. The empty, the bare the naked and poore ſoule, is that wherewith he will betruſt his grace: be earneſt for this, as you would have faith herſelfe. As *Paul* calles death the laſt enemy which muſt be ſubdued ere we have glory: ſo may I ſay, that a proud ſelfe-ſufficient heart is the laſt enemy which muſt be caſt out, ere we can come by any grace. It is the laſt brat of the houſe which goes out. The onely vice which keepes poſſeſſion for old *Adam* to keep out Chriſt. When wee ſee Gods tokens, we count the plague incurable: and when mercy cannot conquer a rebellious heart, it is paſt all remedy. And contrariwiſe here is comfort to all ſuch as are thus tamed by God, they are brought to the bent of his bow; I may ſay to thee as *Martha* to her ſiſter *Mary*, Thy Lord is come, and calleth for thee: And as our Lord Jeſus himſelfe ſaid to *Zacheus*, This day ſalvation is come unto thy houſe, in as much as thou art become a ſonne of *Abraham*. Thy Regions are white unto harveſt, thy ſtaffe ſtands next doore to grace, and thy redemption is neer, nay the day of the Lords redeemed is come, Eſay 63. 4. Oh! thou mayſt lift up thy heart unto God, and ſay, How is it that the Meſſenger of the Lord is come unto me! Lo, on the ſudden I feele mine heart ſo ſtrangely thawed and teachable over it was wont to be, that I can give no reaſon of, except the Lord meanes to ſave me. I therefore interpret it as a ſigne of favour: yea, thou mayſt be ſure of it, and therefore repent thee not of all thy paines, which thou haſt taken for it, ſeeing thy reward will abundantly anſwer thy travaile. And ſo much briefly may ſerve to have ſaid of this uſe and of the Doctrine.

James 4.7.

1 Cor. 15.

Simile.

Luke 19.7.

The chiefe doctrine of the whole verſe opened at large.

I haſten now to the point it ſelfe of *Naamans* obedience: The greateſt and chiefeſt of all other which I aimed at in the handling of this Scripture. *Then* (ſaith the Text) *hee went and waſhed himſelfe ſeven times in Iorden.* What was this? A common act as others were? No other then the former, to come out of Aram, to goe to the King of Iſrael, or to ſtand at the doore of *Eliſha*? Oh yes, thoſe were his own, this is Gods: thoſe he made no bones of, but this was that which had made all this pudder: it was the Lords owne way and device for the triall of his faith in the miracle, and the ſubduing his heart to the naked obedience unto him. And lo, now his ſtomacke is come downe, the let is removed, and therefore he doth as he is bidden, and goeth and waſheth ſeven times in Jorden. Marke the point, it will coſt us ſome time to handle. The point is: Every one who is able to prove himſelfe, within the condition of the promiſe, may and ought to caſt himſelfe upon it, obey the command of God, and beleeve. For the proofe of the point, it will be expedient that firſt we cleare the ground of it, out of the example of *Naaman* in generall; and then by ſome evident texts of Scriptures, with a briefe reaſon or two. And having ſo done, we will proceed to the explication of the contents of the Doctrine. For the generall correſpondence of *Naamans* caſe with this point,

Doctrine. Every ſoule within the condition of mercy, ought to beleeve.

point, ſome may doubt, how it may be ſaid of an Heathen, in the point of curing of a bodily diſeaſe, how he can be ſaid to bee under the condition of a promiſe, and ſo to believe? For anſwer whereof, I ſay as before, that although the worke of grace were a ſtranger unto him, in reſpect of his owne feeling, untill the time that the Lord wrought indeed grace in his heart: yet foraſmuch as the Lord over-ruled all the occurrents in the buſineſſe, by his owne hand, for the effecting of that which he intended, and ſwayed his heart to thoſe preparations which were fit to lead to ſuch an effect. Therefore I do not ſee why (on Gods behalfe) thoſe ſeverall diſpoſitions which were in *Naaman*, may not be proportionable unto thoſe which are wrought in ſuch as are converted to God. That *Naaman* was truly brought home to God, beſides the ſequell in the Chapter, mee thinkes this is ſufficient, that not onely God would chuſe him as the onely Leper whom *Eliſha* ſhould heale: but alſo would order the circumſtances thereof in ſo ſet and ſolemne a manner, that all men may behold a gracious worke as well as a miraculous. For I demand, what ſhould need ſo many interruptions and defeats in the miracle, ſuch a trying and ſearching of a mans Spirit, and ſuch a purpoſed drawing of him, to ſee more then an externall hand in the thing, except more then an outward cure had beene intended by God? A very ſmall and ſhort matter might elſe have been made of it, if the Prophet had been uſed onely to heale his body: and (as *Naaman* thought) the bare comming out, and laying his hand on, or ſpeaking two or three words, might have ſerved the turne. But now the Prophet muſt not bee ſeen, *Naamans* weakneſſe muſt be diſcovered to himſelfe; and hence it appeares, that the Lord would have his Spirit and Soule acquainted with God as well as his outward man. So much for the anſwer of the doubt: And ſo I come to ſhew what conditions were wrought in *Naaman* before his cure, and then how his obedience muſt be an act of faith, iſſuing thereupon: reſpiting prooſes and reaſons till the Doctrine be ſuted to the Text; till which it will not be ſeaſonable to ſettle it upon her bottome. But this wee will referre to the next Lecture.

2 Kings

Anſwer.

THE SEVENTEENTH LECTVRE upon the fourteenth VERSE.

VERSE XIV.

Then he went downe and waſhed himſelfe ſeven times in Iordan, and his fleſh came againe as the fleſh of a little child, and he was cleane.

Further explication of the ground of the point.

Having ſhewed you (beloved) in the end of the former Exerciſe, that *Naamans* example may wel yeeld us the conſideration under our hand, referred the particulars unto this Sermon. *Naaman* then may be conceived under the condition of mercy in the purpoſe of God ſundry wayes: In reſpect of the order that God tooke with him, both in preventing him, and aſſiſting him before the cure. In the former we ſaw how the Lord by a bodily diſeaſe made him in the generall caſe of one needing eaſe: for he abaſed his perſon (in the midſt of ſundry other happineſſes) with the noyſome diſeaſe of Leproſie, which was in it ſelfe a marvellous yoke, and (as God guided it) a very pinching one unto him, burdening him more then in a common manner. If this had not been, the firſt ground of the worke had been removed. Next hereto, the Lord prevents him very ſweetly with the newes of one who (in ſuch a deſperate caſe) is credibly reported unto him, to be a man like to heale him, and this comes to him by a ſpeciall providence appointing a skirmiſh between *Aram* and *Iſrael*, wherein a Damoſell might be taken priſoner, and ſuch a one (one of a thouſand) who had taken notice of *Eliſh's* worth in this kinde: and this being by *Naaman* apprehended, tooke off utter deſpaire of incurableneſſe, and put him into ſome hope of a poſſible cure. Thirdly, hereupon he ſlackens no time, but addreſſes himſelfe in the beſt manner, to uſe the moſt apt and likely meanes for the commending of his buſineſſe to the Prophet, and for the bringing of him to the ſpeech of the Prophet, having (no doubt) a ſpeciall deſire to obtaine that really, whereof hee ſaw poſſibility before. Fourthly, by his travell and furniſh-

How Naaman was under the condition of of cure.

furniſhing himſelfe with gifts, attendance, comming to the King of Iſrael with his meſſage, (wherein he was greatly defeated) he is by the Lord ſo mercifully aſſiſted, that he ceaſed not till by the Prophets owne intimation, and further light and aſſurance not only of a poſſible, but alſo of a likely cure, hee comes to the Prophets owne houſe, and ſtands there to receive his direction: Which ſhewed how reſtleſſe this hope of his made him, and what ſingular eſtimation was bred in him of the Prophet. Fifthly, he ſtanding at the Prophets curteſie, hearing the errand, is marvellouſly offended at it, as too ſlow and leaſurely for his haſty ſpirit; and bewrayes thereupon what a deale of ſcurfe lay within, to cavill againſt it, and to breake off his former hopes and likings, unto an utter diſtaſte and rebellion againſt the way of God, with a furious reſolution to give over, becauſe he neither could ſpeake with the Prophet, nor brooke his direction: which yet was all by God ſweetly governed ſo, that being upon this tickle point, yet was he not ſuffered to depart and goe out of Gods bleſſing into his owne warme Sunne, and to ſinke in his owne carnall ſelfe-love: but ſtronglier aſſiſted then ever, and ſet upon by ſuch powerfull perſwaſions to obey the Prophets counſell, as (although very unlike to prevaile with ſuch a ſpirit) yet wrought out ſelfe-love and pride, and made his ſpirit, at the laſt to come downe and ſubmit thereto moſt readily. And theſe were the paſſages of Gods prevention and aſſiſtance. Now for the perfecting worke of God, it is moſt cleare in this verſe, wherein, his heart being humbled, he aſſents to the Prophet both commanding and promiſing: and (as a man in a fit condition for the purpoſe) doth that which before hee was very unfit for, obeyes, beleeves, goeth down and waſheth himſelfe in Jorden. 2Kings

Thus having made way to the poynt collected hence, I proceed to prove the truth thereof by Scripture; which is not more fertile in any one thing then in proving of this. For although the words of [condition of the promiſe] be not in the Scripture, in tearmes; yet are they equivalently and in effect everywhere in the word both in the Old & New Teſtament. As, when our Saviour ſaith, I came not to call the righteous, but the ſinners to repentance: And, the whole have no need of the Phyſitian, but the ſicke: not ſtomack-ſick, who can eaſe themſelves by vomiting, but the heart-ſicke; and not onely ſo neither, but thoſe that are ſo deadly ſicke, as no other Phyſitian can heale. I am no Phyſitian for fees, but in meere mercy, when no mercenary one can helpe, then for meere pitty, and to ſave life, I will help: rather then a ſoule ſhould miſcary, and rather for the honour of my skill, and mercy, then for gaine (for I take neither money nor price for my cure) I will heale him, Eſay 57.17. Marke upon what termes and conditions Chriſt cures: even as Jorden cured *Naaman*, when Abana & Pharphar were out of date, and himſelfe at a plunge: ſo, when a ſinner is ſuch in his owne ſenſe, (all are ſo, but yet in their element, as a fiſh in the water, feeling no weight of it) feeles it, is convinced of it, and neere to execution, for ought is in himſelfe. What elſe ſave this condition, is implyed in all thoſe Parables of the loſt ſheep, loſt groat, prodigall Sonne? Thoſe that were never loſt, alway found, alway with their father,

Proofes of the Doctrine.

Luke 5.31.32

Eſa.55.1.
Eſa.57.17.

Luke 15 4.8. 11.
Matth.15.24.

2 Kings

father, no fatherleſſe children are excluded out of this number. Why muſt that ſon ſpend all, try the hard world, bee forlorn and forſaken, ere he knew the true worth of a father, ere his father comes out to kiſſe him, to put on all thoſe abiliments upon him, to kil the fat Calf to welcome him? Why did he not ſo to his other good Son, who was alway with him, and therefore needed no Kid nor Calfe? Becauſe hee was alway well, and therefore it had been ridiculous ſo to expreſſe himſelf to him, he would have thought his father a foole in ſo doing. Thus

Hoſee 13.3. *Hoſee* expreſſes the Condition, Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, wee will not ride upon horſes. Why? It was no courſe to thrive: But with thee the fatherleſſe finde mercy. Why? Becauſe it is Gods condition and qualification of ſuch as he will ſave. So Eſay 57.16.17. I am high and holy, but I looke downe, and picke out ſome above others, to

Eſay 28.9. make my favourites. Who are they? The humble ones, to revive the contrite ones; and what will hee doe to ſuch? Hee will create the fruit of the lippes (which is faith, and thereby) peace, to the neere and to the farre off, and reſtore comfort to their mourners. So elſewhere,

Eſay 44.3. I will powre water upon the thirſty grounds, and thirſty lands, ſuch as are ſcorcht and gape for my raines to refreſh them. Againe, whom ſhall I teach wiſedome? To whom ſhall I give inſtruction? Not to all, but to ſuch as are under the condition of it, humble, trembling ones, and weaned from the breaſts, fooles and Ideots. Small credit is to be got by ſuch as have more wiſedome then ſeven men beſides, ſuch as are full of it, but to make a foole wiſe, is ſomewhat worth. How often doth the Lord Jeſus in one Chapter urge this Condition?

Mat.5.3.4.5. Bleſſed are the poore in ſpirit, the hungry after righteouſneſſe, the meeke in heart. Theirs is the Kingdome, they ſhall bee ſatisfied, and the like. Why not others? Doe not they want it? Yes: but they need it not, it were ill beſtowed. The Kingdome of God is like to a

Mat.13.43.44 Merchant, who ſought a Pearle of price; which having found, hee weighed the worth of it: he hid it; hee went and ſold all his reall eſtate, and bought it. Every one could not ſo value it, venture all upon

Jam.4.7.8. it. Submit your ſelves under the mighty hand of God (ſaith *Iames.*) And what then? When you are downe, the Lord will raiſe you up. Thoſe that be raiſed already, care not for this preferment. And to finiſh proofes, what meaneth the holy Ghoſt, by deſcribing all converts by this condition? what went before the converſion of thoſe murderers of the Lord of life? They were convinced of their bloudy malice, and of the mercy of Chriſt, who was willing to ſave them

Act.2.37. that ſlew him; and then they were prickt in heart. What then? Men and brethren, what ſhall wee doe? What made their bowels earne, and made them glad to learne of the Apoſtles? The ſame grace that made them humble. What cauſed the Iaylor to come leaping in to *Paul* and *Silas*, whom he had whipped and wronged? His heart was broke

Act.14. to ſee the mercy which God ſhewed him, and in the keeping in of the Priſoners to ſave his ſoule. So much for proofes.

Reaſon 1. Reaſons of the Doctrine follow. Such onely, and all ſuch may and muſt come in and obey the Goſpell by believing: Becauſe, firſt, No other ſave ſuch, are brought within any generall bounds of ſalvation, but

but ſtill remaine incorrigible, impenitent, ſecure, carnall, and in their ſinnes. If others were (in Gods ordinary way) and alſo in their owne diſpoſition (and frame) capable and meet for mercy, others might as well partake it. We call not Gods prerogative into queſtion, or what he can doe, but what he will doe in his revealed will: Now this being put, then ſecondly I adde, All ſuch ought to embrace it by the meane which God hath appointed for that end; and that is by believing, as the holy Ghoſt in all places urgeth, Acts 13. 38. Epheſ. 2. 8. Ioh. 3. end. Mark. the 16. toward the end: and a thouſand more. For why? Otherwiſe it might be, that Gods election might bee fruſtrate, and his ends defeated: For by this condition of grace, they are called to the meanes: Therefore if the end of calling ſhould not follow in faith, God might poſſibly loſe his ends, which neither Divell, and gates of hell, world, and envie of wicked, or corruption of man can ever effect.

Elſe God ſhould be the God of diſorder: For why? The condition of faith containes the ſeed and foundation (in a remote ſence) of thoſe graces of the Spirit, which afterward are perfected in ſanctification. As in humiliation there is a ſeed of repentance, and in affection of deſire and prizing of Chriſt, is included a ſeed of love, remotely, and in Selfe-deniall is implied a ſeed of mortification, darkly and unſhapenly, as in the firſt life of an infant, is (in a ſort) included all after ripenings and perfections till the birth. Now if there ſhould bee an interruption, and a gulfe ſet, ſo that one of theſe could not come at the other, then muſt God bee made a God, not of order, but of confuſion. *Reaſon 2.*

Theſe perſons thus qualified, muſt and ought to believe, becauſe it is of all others the eaſieſt worke for ſuch to compaſſe, a great part of the difficulty is over: It is alſo moſt for the honour of Gods grace, that ſuch ſhould believe: and ſuch onely can and will performe and practiſe the end of their faith, which is to walke with God in a renewed converſation. None are to bee truſted with ſo weighty a buſineſſe as they: and therefore they may believe. *Reaſon 3.*

Becauſe the promiſe of believing containes in it the effect of all the conſequent promiſes of God: in forgiveneſſe and juſtification there being at once conveyed to the ſoule, all the rich treaſures of Chriſt, all his Legacies to his Church: He gives them all at one gift, though he diſpence them at ſeverall times, as the neceſſities of his people require. If this might bee, then they ſhould be fruſtrate of all grace at once. *Reaſon 4.*

If theſe thus qualified might not believe, then none might (for none are in ſuch faire poſſibility) and then all Gods offers, promiſes, exhortations, and conteſtings, were in vaine: and (as ſome Semipelagians dare affirme) it might be admitted, that poſſibly not one man in the world might beleeve, which were horrible. *Reaſon. 5.*

Laſtly, the Lord conferring Baptiſme before hand to infants (onely within a generall covenant) ſhould mocke us, if hee meant not to vouchſafe that covenant of his to poore ſoules (to bee their God reconciled and all-ſufficient) under the meanes, having given them his *Reaſon 6.*

2 Kings

Seale before hand to ratifie it; which Seale can have no other realneſſe it, ſaye in relation to his faithfull meaning, to effect and write that Covenant in their hearts, which hee hath before hand ſealed unto them. And ſo much for Reaſons.

Now I ſhould come to the Uſe: But becauſe ſome queſtions doe here ariſe, firſt, about this Condition, of what nature it is, and wherein the ſteps of it ſtand. And ſecondly, about Faith, what I mean by it, and how it is wrought. Thirdly. why I call it Obedience and Conſent: therefore I will a little lend my help for explication hereof, and ſo come to the uſes. For the firſt, concerning the nature of this Condition of Faith, my purpoſe is not to bring in large diſcourſe into a Sermon, nor to ſatisfie cavillers about it: I have already done that (ſo farre as I thinke their mouthes worth the ſtopping) in another place. That which here I will adde, ſhall be but this; That whereas many carp at the condition of faith, who yet underſtand it not, let them know, there is a twofold condition; the one procuring, the other ſignifying. Procuring, deſerving, and working conditions, we abhorre; but ſignifying conditions we allow: not as our owne workes, but as Gods previous diſpoſitions in us, ſignifying what hee hath wrought in us, and thereby evidencing what hee further intends to worke. And hereof there is great uſe: both becauſe, as ſinne was not brought to ripeneſſe all at once in us, ſo neither is grace: Alſo, becauſe the worke of it being but leaſurely and graduall, hardly perceived, we ſhould not be privie to it, if God did not point at it by ſenſible and diſcernable affections, as of hope, deſire, ſorrow: but the worke would ſeeme to lye dead in us. Laſtly alſo, becauſe the caſe ſo ſtands with ſome converts, who are called out of a profane eſtate; that if their turning ſhould bee all at once, and on the ſudden, they would feare leſt it would prove but ſome violent pang and extremity in them, not like to hold long. But when they can perceive a ſenſible change by certaine ſteps ſucceſſively, they diſcerne a more divine hand therein, and are much ſtayed and ſatisfied. Adde to theſe, That the Lord in this caſe doth not ſo much look at his own power, what he could doe at once; as at the diſpoſition of ſuch as he worketh upon, whoſe narrow neckes cannot receive much at once, but by drop-meale: and all, through that unſpiritualneſſe of our heart, not eaſily capable of holy things. A crooked cryſome doth not looke upward with more difficulty, then our frame receives grace.

In my Catechiſme, Part. 2. Artic. 7.

Condition of faith is no procuring, but only a ſignifying thing.

Why this condition is required.

Secondly, take knowledge of this, that the immediate worker of theſe preparations, is two-fold: The former is the convincing power of the Law: the latter is the ſucceeding conviction of the Goſpel. And touching this latter, know that although the ſame thing workes faith it ſelfe, which workes this condition, yet by a divers meaſure of aſſiſtance, according to the capacity of the Soule: which at the firſt is drawne to ſee ſo much light in the promiſe, as winnes affections to the ſame, for that excellent pretiouſneſſe, gaine and happineſſe which it heares to be offered therein. But in time it ſees not onely ſo much, but more cloſely alſo applies it ſelfe thereto by faith and affiance of ſoule, as a thing in ſpeciall offered and belonging unto herſelfe; yet both are wrought

The worker of it.

wrought by the Goſpel, and neither comes from our ſelves: both proceed from free grace, ſo that wee muſt not conceive, that the Lord doth offer Chriſt to ſuch as can work their owne hearts to ſorrow, deſire, or eſteem of grace, (for what is ſo contrary to us as theſe things?) But the Lord in working them upon us by the Spirit of Grace, in a weaker degree at the firſt, and unſhapen, doth at laſt by the ſame Spirit bring them to a more full and formed degree, in ſuch as are to bee ſaved. Thirdly note, that this preparation ſtands in a middle nature between meer corruption & the gift of grace it ſelfe, peculiarly ſo called: Preparation is neither to bee called meere Nature, nor any thing which nature alone can affoord: nor yet can it bee called Faith; but a previous ſupernaturall worke, which in them that periſh by ſuffering it to decay, comes to nothing: but in the elect, ends in effectuall calling and beleeving the promiſe. Fourthly note, that yet this muſt not bee truſted unto, as if it were in it ſelfe ſufficient to make the ſoule happy: for ſtill, that which the poore ſinner muſt cling and cleave to, for her pardon & peace, muſt be that only bloud of Chriſt, the ſatisfaction of juſtice. She muſt lay hold on this, and make it her owne, by faith in the promiſe. Thus much for the preſent comes in my minde, to tell you, touching the nature of this Condition. Now I come to the ſteps of it.

It is a middle thing between meere corruption and grace.

The firſt property iſſueth from the convincing power of the morall Law, working the conſcience to be loaden through the ſpirit of bondage. To ſpeake much of any thing in ſpeciall, would ſpend more time then ſuch an Audience and exerciſe admits. I muſt take theſe things for granted, having taught you them in my courſe of catechiſing. One thing I will adde, (which there I omitted) *viz.* to lay you downe ſome markes, whereby you may diſcerne this condition of the Law. All that are loaden, loſt, deadly heart-ſick of the Law, are bidden to come to Chriſt: But who are theſe? 1. Such as cannot look back into their former eſtate of jollity, liberty, and life in ſinne uncontrolled, without wondring and deteſtation of themſelves. 2. A loaden ſoule feeles her ſelfe diſcharged quite from thoſe falſe ſhoulders that ſuffered not ſo intollerable a load of ſinne, and curſe to be felt, but kept the ſoule in a rotten peace. The Law abandons eaſe, ſecurity, boldneſſe, peace, pleaſures, mirth and company, ignorance and ſelfe-conceit, which would not endure ſinne to ſettle upon her right ſubject and lets in a veine of vengeance in ſtead of the veine of vanity and careleſneſſe. 3. The ſoule in this caſe fares as a thing oppreſſed with that which exceeds it. As in all naturall exceſſes, there is either a weakning or deſtroying of the Patient. If light or heat be too exceſſively offered to the eye, or fire to the touch, they deſtroy both: So this wrath of God ceazing exceſſively upon conſcience, doth ſpiritually kill it. 4. This loading is ſuch as exceeds all concealment, or biting it in by modeſty, or patience; it muſt vent it ſelfe, Act. 2. Men and brethren what ſhall we doe? 5. It is glad to heare of the leaſt eaſe: not cavilling with the Inſtrument, but joying in it. 6. She confeſſes God might juſtly cruſh her in peeces, without any purpoſe to redreſſe her. 7. She walkes for ever after, much more warily and tenderly

It is not to be truſted to alone.

The ſteppes of it:
1. Loading by the Law.

A Loaden ſoule what it is, and the markes of it.

2 Kings

derly againſt ſin, then ſuch as never felt this load, though their knowledge be greater. 8. This load is unto the ſoule, as a venomed Dart ſticking to the fleſh, or a burden nailed to the ſhoulder; not poſſible to be puld off, but the more ſhe ſtruggles, the more it ſettles. 9. Other mens loads trouble her not ſo much as her owne: ſhee hath no leaſure to jangle of them, having ſo much to doe at home. 10. Though God ſhould eaſe her, ſhee would not readily return to her old vomit. 11. It is not ſuch a load that cruſheth a legge or an arme; but ſuch as oppreſſes the whole man in each faculty and member. 12. It is not ſuch a load neither as quite deſtroyes; but the ſoule is ſuſtained by God from utter ſinking, till ſhee heare further. Thus much of the Legall.

The ſecond work is from the Goſpel.

Before any further preparation is wrought, the Lord miniſters to the ſoule a further light, and that is the Goſpel, which brings newes to the ſoule in ſuch an eſtate, of a poſſible remedy, through the grace of Chriſt. I muſt not inſiſt in things largely handled elſewhere; but take them for granted here: The ſumme is, that the Lord in the view of that full ſatisfaction of the Lord Jeſus, offers full and free deliverance and eaſe to a ſoule thus loaden, without any equivocation or fraud: And withall diſcovers to her the moſt pretious view of all the good things of God purchaſed for her; though pardon immediately, yet conſequently all other, whereby ſhe may bee made perfectly happy, and rid of her thraldome. And according to the ſoules meaſures in the revealing of this light unto her, ſhe comes more or leſſe forward in thoſe affections and diſpoſitions, which wee call Evangelicall preparation: of which, there had rather bee a volume made then a Sermon; and (as elſewhere I have promiſed) I intend a ſpeciall Treatiſe of them, if God grant life and liberty: (at leaſt of ſo many of them as I have not already handled in other Treatiſes.) Now it ſhall bee ſufficient to point at them (this being the leaſt part of the Doctrine under our hand) and then I will come to the latter branch. This Evangelicall preparation is of two ſorts: The one negative, and of them I point at theſe foure: Firſt, a ſtopping of the Soul from her old courſes, and from relapſing into them. Secondly, a great ſorrow of heart for ſin paſt. Thirdly, a ſpeciall averſation and abhorring for time to come. Fourthly, Selfe-deniall. The other ſort of theſe I call poſitive; and heer take theſe foure alſo: Firſt, an hope raiſed up in the ſoule, which cauſeth her to hold ſtill on with God in his way. Secondly, deſire encreaſing more and more after mercie. Thirdly, an high prizing of it, above all earthly treaſure. Fourthly, reſtleſſe diligence, in uſe of all meanes, till her deſire be accompliſhed with fainting under delay. All theſe are the fruit of the Goſpell, drawing the ſoule to bee willing to hearken after God, although as yet ſhe cannot incorporate herſelfe into the promiſe, nor put Chriſt on as a garment made fit for her; yet by theſe ſhe is drawne to looke toward him: And therefore to ſpeake a word of each, not as I named them, but in their order: Firſt, I ſay, Such a ſoule is loth to give over that little taſte ſhe hath of him, nor can bee pulled from her hearings, duties, prayers and meanes, nor perſwaded to revolt to her old vanities. As *David* ſaith, Such as hearken

Evangelicall preparings either Negative or Poſitive.

Pſal. 85. 4.

after

after God s mercy, returne no more to folly. Secondly, ſuch an one, by the Goſpel conceives an hope a farre off, as it were a glimpſe of light through a cloud, that her eſtate is not quite forlorne: whereupon the extremity of her former feares is much alayd, and ſhee put out of deſpaire, into ſome expectation of better things, although (as in the twilight) much mixture of old terrors remain not quite baniſhed, as the Canaanites among Iſrael, to teach them warre, and to occupy them in combats. Thus was it with thoſe Ninevites, who by the inſtinct of mercy darted into them by the Lord ſecretly, lifted up their heads a little towards hope of not periſhing, and to the muſing upon the benefit of deliverance. The third is an holy compaſſion of heart towards him whom the ſoul hath pierced by ſinne, even the Lord of life, who yet was well content to be murthered, leſt his murtherers ſhould periſh. The due meditation whereof melts the ſoul into marvellous heavineſſe, that ſhe ſhould ſeeke his ruine, who ſought her making. Not as mourning for his death (for elſe ſhe muſt have for ever been damned) but for her treachery againſt the mercy of a Father, who cut off his Plea; and the love of a Saviour who gave his life for her. This makes her impotent in her mourning, and ſteeps her in gall and wormwood, as not able to utter indignation enough againſt her ſelfe for it. Fourthly, yet as one borne downe with the ſingularity of ſuch mercy, and the fulneſſe of that price which is paid to juſtice for her ſinne, ſhee is loth to let it paſſe without a deſire to partake it; yea, and an ardent affection after it, as one that is famiſhed for lack of bread or drinke, can be ſatisfied with nothing ſave that which it longs for, though ſhee were offered treaſures in ſtead of it: yet ſhee ſtill cries with *Rachel*, Give me this, or elſe I dye. And fifthly, here ſhe ſtoppes not, but warily lookes about her, that ſhe binde not the hands of mercy from beſtowing her deſire upon her, by her boldneſſe and looſneſſe of heart & life, and therfore ſhe is watchful to her ſelf, leſt in this her purſuit after mercy, ſhe ſhould offend it any way, by her pride, frowardneſſe, baſe words, paſſions, or behaviours, worldlineſſe, commonneſſe of heart about her earthly lawfull buſineſſe, looſe hearing, forgetfulneſſe, or the like. Sixthly, ſhe is marvellous reſtleſſe in the applying of her ſelfe to all ſuch meanes and ordinances as might further her deſires, and reveale unto her more light and evidence of Chriſt; fearing leſt by any defect of hers, and letting ſlip the opportunities and ſeaſons of grace, and ſtirring motions of the Spirit, ſhee might provoke the Spirit of grace to give her over to her owne unprofitableneſſe: ſhe tries all, as aſcribing that honour to God, to chuſe what he will worke by: to theſe hornes of the Altar ſhe will cleave, and if ſhee muſt dye, ſhee will dye there. Seventhly, the more ſhe growes in underſtanding of the way, and myſtery of ſalvation by Chriſt, the more ſhee compares it with the beſt contents which this world in any kinde did ever preſent unto her; and finding them light in the ballance, and farre from being what they ſeeme, or performing what they promiſe: nay, although they could doe both, yet in compariſon with mercy, ſhee ſtamps them under her feet, eſteeming them all as droſſe and dung. Laſtly, by this meanes ſhe reſolves fully in her laſt thoughts, to ſell off all,

Zachar. 12. 10.

Gen. 30. 1.

Phil. 3.

2 Kings

all whatsoever might seeme pretious unto her, lusts, liberties, vertues, Religious duties, yea, that onely stop of grace, the mixture of Selfe with Christ, that so shee might in the losse of all, make up a price of grace, that is, that she may come with nothing, and make a price of no price, and so buy the Pearl; till which purchase be made her own, she can have no peace: And this purchase stands in her faith, which as an hand takes and accepts the seasin and delivery of the Lord Jesus, given to her by the hand of him that surrenders him unto her, by the promise. Touching the which act of faith, it remaines that we speake a little, having said of this preparation so much as for the present wee think meet.

Touching faith what it is, and how it is bred in the soule.

Concerning which, and first of the nature of it (so farre as it is the act of the soule obeying and yeelding to a word of promise) I will say a little, as may best sute the Text here under our hand. *Naaman* then (we see) overswayed by his servants, doth submit himselfe to the word of the Prophet, and hee goes to Jorden, and washeth. Faith then (to tell you first in what it stands not) is not properly an habit of assurance or certainty of pardon, through a personall and particular appropriation of Christ to her selfe. The originall of this error proceeded (as many others have done) from heat of confuting Papists, in their opposing of possibility of Assurance. That wee might the more fully confute them, our first defenders would maintaine, that the nature of justifying and saving faith stood in assurance, which Tenet was indeed more then a confutation: for although it is the portion of none save beleevers to enjoy this assurance, yet neither is it the portion of all that beleeve, to attaine it, (but only some special ones to whom it is granted) neither is that assurance which such have, the formal act of their faith, but rather an effect or cõsequent of the act of beleeving, & of an higher measure then that is. For sure it is, the greater our feeling of assurance is, the lesse our faith is. To shew then what it is: It is such an act of the soule, as upon good ground and warrant, casts her selfe upon the promise for pardon and life. By [casting her selfe] can be meant no assurance within her selfe, but a submission and resigning up of her selfe to the promise, in respect of that power and truth of the Promiser who bids her come, and hee will ease her. This is a sure word, and hath neither trick nor device in it, neither hooke nor crooke, but is that which it imports, and cannot deceive: And this sure word is the object which faith lookes at: Shee lookes not so much at the assurance which shee feeles within her selfe; but at the certaine and infallible truth of the Word without. As for her selfe, shee knowes shee is full of doubts, feares and unsetledneſse; but so is not the Word of God, nor himselfe that speakes in it. She even in the very act of believing, is full of strife and struggling. For the making of this plaine, consider faith in all her passages, and you shall see it.

Although assurance be never without faith, yet assurance is not the proper act of Faith.

Quest. 1. The soule hath three questions. The first question is, whither the Soule shall turne her selfe in her legall straits? Flesh saith thus; Goe on no further towards the promise: for it is a difficult worke to believe, and unlikely to take effect; or if it doe, yet thou shalt alway be doubtfull. The Word on the contrary saith; Doe not desist, nor revolt

revolt to thy former pleaſure in ſin, for in that courſe there is no hope, thou art then in a deſperate caſe: Proceed rather and goe to the promiſe, for thereby its poſſible thou maiſt find ſome redreſſe. What doth the ſoul in this ſtrife? She compares the argument of the word, with the counſell of the fleſh, and findes it better then this; becauſe it is farre more ſafe to chuſe a poſſible redreſſe of miſery, then to fall upon the aſſured pykes of certaine wo and deſpaire. Here we ſee a fight, but no victory, no aſſurance; only that reſt which the ſoule hath, is not from any thing ſhe feeles within herſelfe, but without in the word.

2. *Queſt.*

Secondly, here comes in a ſecond doubt, and therein Satan tells the ſoule, it is true, Thou chuſeſt hope before deſpaire, but what haſt thou to doe with peace? Or how knoweſt thou whether thou oughteſt rather to chuſe the one, then the other, or what right haſt thou to eaſe and pardon? Here againe ſteppes in the word, and ſuccours the ſoule, telling her, That ſhe ought to faſten upon life and pardon, and chuſe it before ſinne and death; for God hath bred in her the condions of faith, a longing, mourning, reſtleſſe, ſelfe-denying heart, therefore to her and to no other this pardon and eaſe belongs, and ſhe may claime it. God indeed hath no where ſaid in his word, I will pardon thee *Iohn*, thee *Thomas*, &c. But he hath ſaid, ſuch and ſuch I will pardon, ſo and ſo qualified: Now ſhe aſſumes this qualification to herſelfe, and therefore ſhe concludes, that to her it belongs. This is another word of the Spirit, which ſtill drawes on a poore ſoule to bee willing to beleeve.

3. *Queſt.* How ſhall I know in ſpeciall its mine owne?

But now comes the neareſt worke of the Spirit in the word, and that anſwers a third objection, which is this: Perhaps it may belong unto ſuch a one as I am, but many things belong to men, which yet they are by one meanes or other defeated of: How ſhall I know that God will give it me in ſpeciall, and grant me the gift of faith to beleeve it? In this, the word grapples cloſely and nearly with the ſoule, and brings it to the ſtrict point of beleeving, and tells the ſoule, That all to whom the promiſe of pardon and life belongs by the allowance of God, he will moſt undoubtedly bring it to paſſe for them, and conferre it upon them; yea and give them faith to caſt themſelves upon it. For in ſaying, Come unto me all you loaden ones, and I will eaſe you, he meanes not onely you may, but you muſt come; not only it belongs unto you to come, but I will, in my calling you, enable you to come, and put ſtrength and power into you to come, that is to beleeve, and by beleeving, eaſe you. By this, the word ſetles the ſoule upon the promiſe, as being that which it ſeemes; ſhe ſees God is willing ſhe ſhould beleeve, and therefore will conferre it on her: And in ſo doing, the Spirit cauſeth the heart which is willing, to become effectually willing, that is, takes away all feare of defeating, and tells her, ſhe ſhall ſpeed of her deſire; and therefore now ſhe dares venture, and caſt herſelfe upon the promiſe, and if ſhe periſh ſo, ſhe is content, for ſhe dares jeopard her ſoule upon Gods Truth. Now we ſee this caſting and venturing upon the promiſe is the beſt of all theſe three acts of the word; and yet here is no aſſurance, for the ſoule, in reſpect of herſelfe, is nevertheleſſe full of doubting; all her bottome

2 Kings

bottome is this laſt word of the promiſer, that he will effect that in the ſoule which he hath promiſed: By all theſe I inferre, The act of faith is no aſſurance within, but an evidence without, reſting upon the word; which word the more evident it is made to the ſoule, the better and ſtronger is the act of beleeving, but the beſt of theſe is no aſſurance. It will bee demanded, May not aſſurance be had at all? I anſwer, yes, it may be, and is the portion of ſuch as the Lord ſees meet to enjoy it; but that ſtands upon another bottome, and that is the immediate evidence of the Spirit in the conſcience of one who is already a beleever, making her to know that ſhe beleeves. This is not by the word directly, but the Spirit of the word which reflects that into the heart with knowledge and feeling, which before ſhe only had by the fidelity of the Promiſer. But, this (as I ſaid) is not faith, (for then none ſhould have faith who want this, which God forbid;) but an effect of faith in ſome ſpeciall perſons, and not all that beleeve. Thus much for the former queſtion. Now for the latter, *viz.* how faith is wrought.

Queſt.
Anſw.

Eph.1.
Rom.8.

The ſufficiency of a promiſe, is the object of faith.

You ſee brethren it is evident, that the nature and worke of ſaving faith ſtands not in any fulneſſe of ſailes, or reflex knowledge and overpowring ſweetneſſe of perſwaſion: But (as I ſaid) in a grounded caſting herſelf upon the word: For by this only mean faith is wrought. And I call it (grounded) becauſe ſo weighty a matter as the reſting and caſting of the ſoule upon a thing, requires, that the thing bee a foundation of great warrant to beare up a ſoule from revolting againe. Nay, when the conſcience is come thus farre, as to faſten upon the word, Oh! ſhe hath thouſand objections againſt the ſincere meaning of God in his word. Hence it is, that the word is ſo full of places wherein this ſufficiency of the promiſe to reſt upon is urged: Sometime the Lord conteſts with them that quarrell againſt it. Is the Arme of the Lord ſhortned? Hath he ſaid it, and it ſhall not come to paſſe? *Hezechia* tells us, Eſay 38.15. He hath ſpoken himſelfe unto us, and he hath done it, Heb.13.5. For he hath ſaid, I will not faile, nor forſake thee. So againe, The mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it. Among men its called an unſure argument to prove a thing by authority, becauſe men are liars further then their truth will ſpeake for them: And yet ſome great perſons have born ſuch ſway and authority in the hearts of their Diſciples, that their bare word hath carried aſſent with it. But to be ſure, this is a ſure argument God hath ſaid it, therefore it is true, as in all the words which ever went out of his mouth, ſo eſpecially in his promiſe, that above all, pleads certainty. Faithfull is he who hath promiſed, who alſo will effect it. And *Elizabeth*, Luke 1. tells *Mary*, There ſhall bee a performance from the Lord to his handmaid of that which he hath promiſed. All the promiſes of God are Yea and Amen in Chriſt Jeſus, with a thouſand more. But generall texts ſatisfie not a ſcrupulous ſoule in ſo weighty a matter; and fleſh is ready to ſay, what ſigne from heaven ſheweſt thou us of theſe things? We would ſee ſome ſight, or heare ſome voice to confirme the word. Ah poore ſoule! I may ſay of thee as the Scripture ſpeakes of *Samuel*, thus did he ere he knew the Lord; ſo theſe are thy crotchets

Phil.4.
2 Cor.1.20.

1 Sam.3.

crotchets ere thou kneweſt the promiſe: But afterward thou ſaweſt more in that alone, then in all other waies; for the Promiſe and Teſtament of Chriſt, is written with the finger of God by the penne of the Spirit dipt in the bloud of God. But (to utter what God is willing to have ſpoken) I muſt ſay that he who might claime this abſolute power over the ſoule to be beleeved upon his bare word: yet, ſeeing the ſenſuality of man, and our wofull diſtruſt, is willing to allow us all the meanes of ſtrengthening our ſoules in his promiſe, both by ſuch ſeales and witneſſes as confirme it, yea Miracles, Sacraments, and oaths, annexed to his Covenant, and eſpecially by thoſe properties of a promiſe, and of him that makes it; and all to conclude and ſet the controverſie beyond queſtions. And by this meane faith is wrought. 1 Sam. 2.

In the which courſe of God, appeares his great love and wiſdome; for herein hee hath endeavoured to anſwer all our doubts and carnall objections; we are not ſo ready to caſt in feares, as he by this meane caſts them out. For why, O poore ſoule doſt thou ſuſpect the Lord will not ſatisfie thy deſire in giving thee Chriſt? Either it muſt bee becauſe there is no ground or cauſe for which he ſhould doe it, and this is anſwered by his freedome & graciouſneſſe: Or he is a God juſt and revenging ſin, but this is taken away by ſatisfaction made & taken: Or becauſe he cannot, and this is falſe, for his power is omnipotent: Or becauſe he meant it not eternally: But the promiſe is from election: Or wills not in time: But that he doth, for he invites and beſeeches us, Or he is not wiſe enough to compaſſe it: But that he is, for he is wiſdome: Or he is untrue in his performance: But that he is not, for he is faithfull: Or he may change, but that he cannot, for he is immutable: So that let us but ſet perfection of nature and grace in him, againſt that which is in us, our diſtruſt and unbeleefe, and we ſhall ſee every ſore hath his plaſter, each diſtemper hath his medicine. And all theſe are included in a promiſe: So that whoſoever hath the gift of ripping up a promiſe aright ſhould behold all Gods riches in it: But is a great skill, and the promiſes of God lye in the Scriptures, as gold and jewells lye deep in the earth, at leaſt in the field of the Goſpell, and we are not aware of them, nor acquainted with that fulneſſe and perfection which is in them: And many confeſſe one of theſe, who will not acknowledge another; grace comes in drop by drop, elſe, wee ſhould looke upon a promiſe with other eyes, then (for the moſt part) the moſt of us doe. A word or two of each of the branches. The ingredients of a promiſe.

For the firſt: Freedome: true it is, there is nothing in thee to procure ſuch mercy; but he is of his owne accord, for his owne ſake, cut off his plea, & thought thoughts of peace, he hath done it for the glory of his grace, even becauſe he will ſhew mercy; it better pleaſed him ſo to doe, then the firſt creating of *Adam*; for now by his fall, he addes mercy to goodneſſe, and magnifies himſelfe in many attributes more, Juſtice, Wiſdome and Truth: He ſeekes nothing elſe, ſave the winning and binding of the ſoule to him for ever in covenant which elſe ſo treacherous an heart as ours would never have yeelded to: So that thou maiſt well truſt him in this reſpect, if thy faith can but get in with 1. Freedome. Eſay 63. 4.

2 Kings

the Lord; for if he do it not for thine ends, yet for his own he will, ſo that thou canſt ſet thine owne under his; ſo that thy beſt prop will be, the preciouſneſſe of his glory, which he will not give to another, and therefore thy unbeleefe ſhall not rob him of it.

2. Strength.

Secondly, ſatisfaction is made and taken; therefore he hath ground enough to ſettle his graciouſneſſe upon. Juſtice could not cry it down by revenge, rather then it ſhould, a ſatisfaction made by the bloud of an onely Sonne, the bloud of God and man ſhall ſtoppe the cry of it: upon this, both made by Chriſt, and taken by our Judge, lo, he turns wrath into mercy, and his boſome is ſet open and unlocked as a fountaine, 2 Cor.5.20,21. He offers us reconciliation, becauſe hee hath made him ſinne, and curſe, who knew none, that we might bee his righteouſneſſe. And this is called the Lords ſtrength, Eſay 27.4. that is the bottome whereupon mercy maintaines herſelfe againſt all quarrell of juſtice, and this hath taken away the dint of it, ſo that hee truly profeſſeth, anger is not in me; therefore come in, not to an enemy, but to a father, feare not.

3. Omnipotence.

Thirdly, he is omnipotent: He can doe what hee will: His power uſhers and attends his love as an handmaid, Eſay 57.14. The high and lofty one who inhabiteth eternity, yet lookes downe, that he may be ſtrong with the humble and contrite ones. His power is no cruſhing power, ſave of our enemies, and all that hate us: But a releeving power, an outſtretched arme of ſalvation; Not to deſtroy, but to build up, Eſay *63*.1. He that commeth from Edom, dyed red with the treading of the winepreſſe of wrath, is glorious in his apparrell, travells in the greatneſſe of his ſtrength, and is mighty to ſave: Be the thing never ſo difficult to us, with him nothing is impoſſible. Can the Lord (ſay they) ſpread a table in the wilderneſſe? The anſwer is, can he not? What is it which he cannot doe? Except it be to deny himſelfe, and that, nothing, no not thy unbeleefe can bring him unto. This power of God cannot be ſevered from the former ſatisfaction.

4. Eternity. Prov.22.8.

Fourthly, he meant it from eternity, (as I ſaid in the firſt of theſe) he ſet downe with himſelfe the frame and way of his owne grace, long before *Adam* was, or ſinned, the diſeaſe was foreſeen, the remedy fore provided: Its a ſecret which lyes deep and hidden in the boſom of eternity, though not farre above us in point of participation in this life, yet in comprehenſion we muſt not looke to reach it here: We may cry out, O depth unſearchable, and paſt finding out! But till we come to heaven, and behold it in the face of God, being made one with him, we cannot gage it: our happineſſe is, that it is really ſo great that we cannot.

Rom.9.end.

5. Willingneſſe.

Fifthly, he wills it moſt cordially in the revealing of it, for who ſhall conſtrue it otherwiſe, who heares how many ſweet invitations, cords of perſwaſion, arguments to enforce, terrors againſt deſpiſers he uſes? Eſay 55.1. and 2. verſes: Read that Chapter, and marke his offer, Come, all you that thirſt, drinke freely: His conteſt verſe 2. Why lay you out ſilver for no bread? His compellation, Incline thine eare, hearken unto me and come, &c. He that concludes not hence, that the Lord is willing to communicate his grace, nay, takes thought

thought leſt it ſhould not be accepted, and would rejoice if it might; muſt needs call God a notorious diſſembler, which were helliſh ſacriledge: And this a main point for all who confeſſe Gods power and are convict, yet are not ſo of his will. If thou wilt thou canſt heal me. 2 Kings

Luke 5.12. 1 Tim 1.17.

Sixtly, he is Wiſdome it ſelfe. When the Apoſtle had ſpoken of this myſtery, he concludes, Now to the only wiſe God be honour, &c. Why ſo wiſe? Becauſe of all other waies he thought this the beſt; he would in the beſt of his counſells finde out no other, nay could not finde out any ſo good as this; for then, who is only wiſe, would. And the like I may ſay of the manner of publiſhing of it: By men like our ſelves, of like infirmity, who might familiarly inſinuate themſelves: By a promiſe (rather then by any waies of old, as viſions, miracles, or voice of his immediately) as more ſpirituall and effectuall. So that the very Angells looke into it with admiration; how much more ſhould we cry out, Oh the depth of the riches of the wiſdome of God! To all unbeleevers a ſtumbling blocke and fooliſhneſſe, but to us that beleeve, the wiſdome and power of God.

6. Wiſdome.

Heb. 1.1.

Rom. 11.33.

Seventhly, his faithfulneſſe. It is a principle. God is not a man that he ſhould lye: The ſtrength of Iſrael cannot lye: God will not be mocked, therefore neither will he mocke any. And therefore hee hath bound it with an oath to *Abraham* and his ſeed, Surely in bleſſing I will bleſſe thee: Therefore *Simeon* ſaith, To performe the covenant which he ſware to our father *Abraham*, that he would give us: They are called the ſure mercies of *David*, and Heb. 6.18. In the covenant and oath, adde thereto the ſeale of his Sacraments which ſpeake to each ſoule in particular; in Baptiſme thus, I baptiſe thee; in the Supper thus, The body of Jeſus broken for thee, The bloud which was ſhed for thee. And as himſelfe is, ſo is his word in each part, Heaven and Earth ſhall paſſe, but not one jot or tittle thereof ſhall paſſe: Above all, his promiſes cannot, which are his firſt borne, and carry with them the birthright of his faithfulneſſe; and therefore are a maine bottome to reſt upon.

7 Faithfulneſſe. 1 Sam. 15. Luke 8.

Laſtly, his unchangeableneſſe. His nature is ſo, as *Iob* ſaith, he decreeth and changeth not: Farre above all decrees of Medes and Perſians. Although we read oft in Scripture, that it repented God of ſome things; yet of this he ſaith, I have ſworne and will not repent, Thou ſhalt be a Prieſt after the order of *Melchiſedec*. If foure thouſand yeares could have changed the minde of God, Chriſt had never came. And looke how the Lord was in the great promiſe, ſo is he in all that follow thereupon. God willing to ſhew to the heires of his Promiſe, the immutability of his Counſell, and againe, that by two immutable things, wherein it was impoſſible God ſhould lye, we might have ſtrong conſolation in our taking refuge. So that nothing can ſeparate up from his love, firſt nor laſt. Thus in theſe few particulars, I have ſhewd what bottomes faith may have to cleave to a word, and to caſt herſelfe upon it for pardon and life. And ſo much for the firſt Queſtion. Now I come to the ſecond. If any deſire further light in this, let him conſult with my booke of Sacraments in the triall of faith.

Job 23.13.

8. Unchangeableneſſe.

Gal. 4.4.

2 Kings

And that is, why faith is called Obedience and Consent? This question ariſes from the ground of the Text: For *Naaman* (you ſee) being convinced by his ſervants, obeyes and conſents, and doth as he is bidden. Eſay 1.19. If ye conſent and obey, you ſhall eat the good things of the land. Hence I call faith by theſe names, only obſerve that one and the ſame faith in divers relations, hath divers names. As it relates to a command of the Goſpell, ſo its obedience: As to a perſwaſion, ſo it is conſent. As *Naaman* then in one act, both obeyed the command of the Prophet, and conſented to the promiſe, or perſwaſion thereof; ſo doth faith obey God commanding, and conſent to him promiſing or perſwading. This is the Commandement of God that you beleeve in his Sonne whom he hath ſent. As *Peter* to his Maſter, ſo faith ſaith to this command, At thy command Lord I will let downe my net, although it ſeeme never ſo abſurd. As *Abraham* being commanded by God, went downe right, without looking at the abſurdities or objections: firſt, he would kill him, and then thinke of them, and drownd them all in the charge: ſo doth faith nakedly obey againſt all ſtops, and then caſts them upon him who ſet her on worke. So againe, ſhee conſents to his promiſe and perſwaſions: Much like *Rebecca* having heard and ſeene *Iſaacs* motion and tokens, anſwered I will goe with the man: She ſaw enough againſt it, but the perſwaſions of *Eliezer* were more potent to overpoiſe her Spirit. So doth faith, ſhe hath a thouſand cavills and diſſwaſives; yet ſhe breakes through and conſents, and then ſhee heares no more of them. Thus *Abraham* hearing the promiſe of *Iſaac*, is ſaid not to looke at *Sara's* wombe, which was now withered; but hee looked ſimply at the promiſe, and caſt them upon God. So that this act of faith caſting herſelfe upon the word, doth both obey nakedly the word of command, and conſents to the promiſe, as *Naaman* here doth to both theſe words of the Prophet, *Goe waſh, and be cleane.* So much alſo for this ſecond queſtion. Now it is time to come to the Uſes.

Queſt. Why faith is called Obedience and Conſent?

Luke 5.

Gen. 24.18.

Vſe 1. Terror for all ſuch as live prophanely, and yet thinke themſelves within a condition of mercy.

And firſt I will inſiſt upon the condition of the promiſe: Firſt then, here is Terror for all ſuch as are ſo farre from the condition of faith, that they utterly reject and caſt it off: And of theſe there are two ſorts: The one prophane, the other ſchiſmatickes. For the former, They pleaſe themſelves with this, That God bids all ſorts indifferently bee reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5.20. be they never ſo baſe and lewd, yet Chriſt came to ſave them if they can beleeve; but as for this preparation, they cannot tell what it meanes, they will let God alone with that, ſo they can beleeve they ſhall doe well. And that they hope they doe, and had alway a good faith to God, and a good meaning to men: They confeſſe they breake out ſometimes, as others doe, but ſo long as they cry God mercy, they ſhall doe well; for they underſtand that Chriſt was a loving Preacher, & kept company rather with the worſer ſort, then the better; many Publicans and ſinners, yea harlots, and was the ſinners friend: And it was not they who put him to death, but ſuch as went for the devouteſt and moſt preciſe in thoſe times: But oh yee deluded fooles! Doe you thinke that when ſinne hath

hath incorporated herſelfe ſo long, and like a fretting leproſie ſeated it ſelfe in their bowells by long cuſtome, that all on the ſuddaine you ſhould be changed by the conceit of their beleeving? What? Are there no ſteps of calling to be obſerved? Why then did *Iohn Baptiſt* goe before Chriſt in the Spirit of *Elias*? Why did hee batter downe the rebellious ſpirits of men? And why did hee caſt downe every high hill, and fill every valley? Why did he prepare a way for Chriſt in the ſouls of people, crying, Repent, for the Kingdome of Heaven is at hand? Why did he plow up mens fallow grounds? And turne the ſpears of men into mattocks, and their ſwords into plowſhares? Oh take heed! I will not ſay, all your abſtinence from ſinne can ſave you; but your jollity and boldneſſe in it may ſo harden you and encreaſe your chaines through rebellion, that you ſhall finde it an hard thing for mercy to pierce you! Therefore take counſell; thinke not that mercy can ſave you in the midſt of your lewdneſſe, when you come ſteaming out of the ſtewes, or from your alebenches, or in the midſt of your ſports and pleaſures: What God can doe, I aske not; its not ſafe for you to truſt to that; looke what he will doe: Therefore, let the point of the ſpeare of the Law pierce your ſides, let it taw and breake your fierce ſpirits; goe not on to ſinne againſt light: Defile not your conſciences by wilfull rebellions, covetous, drunken, contentious, treacherous and voluptuous courſes: looke not that God ſhould meet you in your curſed way, when as he hath appointed you to meet him in his owne way! Rather apply your ſelves to his word to prepare your ſpirits for mercy: Repent, that is breake off the cuſtome and jollity of your ſins, the Kingdome of Heaven is at hand: This counſell to ſuffer affliction, and the ſpirit of bondage, by the ſenſe of guilt and wrath would bee an wholeſome School-maſter to bring you to Chriſt.

Matth. 3. 1, 2.

Eſay 28.

Oh! if you (my brethren the Miniſters) would remit a little of your pleaſures and liberties, and apply your ſelves to a right order of preaching the Law and Chriſt, and give them a view of the way of God to heaven, you might the more hopefully leave them to God; elſe how ſhould blinde people, laden with ſinne, ſtumble upon Gods preparations? Will they not rather abuſe the grace of God, and wax inſolent in turning it into wantonneſſe, making the remedy worſe then the diſeaſe? Oh! ſcare them out of their prophaneneſſe, corraſive their feſtred ſores, ſow not pillowes, ferret them out of their dennes, their ſtarting-holes, errors, excuſes and covers of ſhame. Alas! they have a thouſand of ſuch trickes to ſeduce them: Baſe conceits of the Miniſtery, the difficulty of faith, of repenting, and forſaking their luſts, falſe opinion of the way of God of them who profeſſe it; they are poyſoned ſo deeply by Satan and baſe cuſtomes in ſinne, ſo leavened with a conceit, that either there is ſomewhat in themſelves to demerit God, their good meanings, ſetting of their good deeds againſt their bad, and ſuch like: or elſe thinking that Chriſt ſerves for no other end, ſave to be their ſtalking-horſe, under whom they may ſin ſecurely, that grace may abound the more. They dreame that becauſe the World is hard, therefore men are ſet here to heare the Word, to

A caveat. Miniſters ſhould gaſter prophane people out of their prophaneneſſe & errors.

Rom. 4.

2 Kings

keep them from theft, to hold them in awe, from out-rages: and ſo, if they can worke, and pay their debts, bring up their charge, and get money, they are well. Oh! labour to ſeaſon them with this ſalt of preparation, that their faces may bee ſharpned to looke heaven-ward, and to breake off their lewd wayes, that they may ſo come within the bounds of the Kingdome, and not live like Salvages and Epicures, or worldlings, whoſe hope reaches no further then this life. So much for this former ſort.

2 Branch. Schiſmatickes, who reject all ſteps & marks of converſion, cleaving to the ſpirit of free grace, confuted.

Againe ſecondly, this is for reproofe of ſuch Sectaries as are lately riſen up among us in ſundry places, who are ſo ſpirituall (forſooth) that the Doctrine of the condition of faith, and caſting of the Soule upon the promiſe, are beggarly elements with them; they eſteeme them carnall matters and devices of mens braine. They hold indeed there is uſe of a Law and Goſpell, to tame men firſt, and then to comfort them: But in this Goſpell they have found out a new and more compendious courſe then others: For they ſay, there is a grace offered in the promiſe by ſuch a Spirit of freedome, that it will not endure any bondage of the letter, nor ſuffer men to bee puzled and enthralled with theſe conditions of a Promiſe, nor to tye themſelves to a promiſe, and the markes or ſignes of believing. This they count baſe, and unbeſeeming ſuch a Spirit of free grace as they have found out: and therefore they ſcorn all thoſe who buſie their thoughts about ſuch workes of preparations: and tell them, they will get more comfort in an houre by the Spirit of this their free grace, then theſe lazy and leaſurely beleevers can doe in ſeven yeares. But oh you fantaſticke and deluded ones! where learne you in the Word, that there is a Spirit which workes without a Word? Or by what meanes come you to lay hold of this Spirit, ſave by the Word? If by the Word, then of neceſſity by ſuch markes and prints as the Word workes. And although there is a Spirit ſpoken of in the Goſpell, which witneſſeth to our Spirits, that we are the Lords, yet how doth it witneſſe it, ſave by the Word? Is every hearer at the firſt daſh ſo ripe and perfect, that preſently (as a fledge bird flying out of her neſt, and leaving her Damme) he can ſoare aloft in the sky, and mount up to heaven by the Spirit of aſſurance? So that he ſhall no more need any promiſe, any conditions, or markes to teſtifie the grace of God wrought in him? Put caſe that God hath ſome ſpeciall ones, to whom (after they have beleeved) he hath given the Spirit to ſeale them to the aſſurance of ſalvation? Is this the caſe of every novice, as ſoon as hee heares that Chriſt freely forgives ſinners, to bee hoyſed up with ſuch a ſpirit of freedome, that needs no word nor promiſe to ſupport them? That preſently they are paſt all doubtings, and need no prayer for pardon, being paſt all gun-ſhot of corruption or unbeliefe, Divell or temptation? But I have confuted theſe elſewhere in a Treatiſe for the nonce, here I will paſſe them over.

Vſe 2. Of Reproofe. Repentance goes not before Faith.

Secondly, this is for reproofe of all ſuch as run into another extremity of errour about this point of preparation. And, becauſe they heare, that God uſually workes the condition of faith, ere hee worke faith it ſelfe, therefore they ſay, that the grace of repenting goes before

fore the grace of beleeving: Thus confounding the preparations of the Goſpell, with ſanctification the fruit of faith: Or making ſanctification the generall, and repentance and faith two ſpecialls; and preſuppoſing a needleſſe faith, for what needs faith to ſuch as have repented, and are converted to God without it? And yet as abſurd as this error is, it is ſtrange to thinke what abundance both of Miniſters and people are rooted in this error! Nay, and diſpute ſtrongly for it too: Oh! ſay they, Doth not the Scripture ſay, Chriſt will not dwell with corruption? Light with darkeneſſe? Doth not *Iohn Baptiſt* bid them repent the firſt thing he doth? And *Peter* Act. 2. Repent and beleeve? Oh ye blinde guides! See you not how under the pretext of your devotion, you overthrow Chriſt? Saint *Paul* ſaith, That Chriſt is the myſtery of godlineſſe; as if he ſhould ſay, there is no ſea but water, nor grace, ſave Chriſt: but you will make grace to ſtand in a repentance before faith: No, no, repenting cannot be conceived of without purging of the conſcience firſt. Now faith is the firſt and onely purifier of the heart. We cannot of our ſelves diſpoſe our owne hearts to grace, to pureneſſe: Therefore amend your errors ariſing from the miſtaking of the text: *Iohn Baptiſt* calls legall humiliation repenting; as is evident by the words following, for the Kingdome of Heaven is at hand, by which he meanes the Goſpell was approaching; therefore it was not come already. Saint *Peter* ſo places repenting before beleeving, not as ſetling any order of the graces, but as making both eſſentiall to converſion; for in other Scripture we read otherwiſe, Beleeve and be baptiſed, and then repent. Touching the place of *Paul*, it touches not the order of graces in converſion, but ſpeakes of them who were converted already: ſaying, That they ſinned fouly in mixing Chriſt with Idolls, that is, offending weake conſciences in their eating things ſacrificed to Idolls, and ſo partaking with heathens. So much for theſe: only I adde, let no man thinke that I maintaine any ſucceſſion of graces in converſion: for all Chriſt is given at once to a beleever, yet in an orderly underſtanding, that which hath the nature of a forme firſt, and then that which is a formall conſequent thereupon.

1 Tim. 4. ult.

Acts 16. 31. 2 Cor. 6. 15.

Note this.

Thirdly, this is alſo reproof and that ſharpe, to all ſuch as although they affirm the ſame truth in doctrine with us, yet deny it in effect, and apply not themſelves wiſely and humbly to this way of the Goſpell. If this point be true, that none ſave thoſe who are under the condition of the promiſe, may caſt themſelves upon it: Then thoſe are very faulty that dally with the Goſpell in the offer of ſalvation, feele no gracious preparations wrought in them thereby, no ſorrowes, no deſires, no paines, no love, joy, care to uſe the meanes, no reſtleſſe heart after faith: But wanze away their pretious time, as if one ſhould ſet up a candle in a darke houſe to do no work by, but to prate and jangle, play and be merry, and tell tales: Others alſo who at the firſt newes of the Goſpell, were a little joyed, and counted the feet of the Miniſter beautifull; but neglecting that ſeaſon of grace in which the Lord offered to worke in them, and contenting themſelves with knowledge, or the good opinion of Preachers, or ſome ſparkles of their

3. Branch. Dallers with the Goſpell, or attenders upon it for a ſeaſon, reproved.

2 Kings

their owne, never proceeded further to try whence they came, or whither they tended; much leſſe can prove that theſe were wrought in them by the promiſe, or that they were truly loaden, ſo that nothing elſe could eaſe them but Chriſt: And therefore ſuch are not willing [illegible]ring their ſorrow or deſire to the touchſtone, but after a long p[illegible]ion, when trouble comes, or their Miniſters are taken from them, and ſo the five is taken out of the water; on the ſuddaine all which they ſeemed to have, wanzeth away: They gathered not with Chriſt, and therefore ſcatter as faſt. And in theſe, that ſad ſpeech is verified, To him that hath not, ſhall bee taken away even that they ſeemed to have. Dally not with the pretious things of God, abuſe not the Goſpell and your hearings to pleaſe and pride your ſelves: Conſider well the ſcope and end of your trafficke: It ſhall not be asked of you in the day of accounts, how many Sermons you have heard, or what affections you have had; but what your ſelves are? Be wiſe therefore, & amend both theſe errors. Firſt, behold ſuch pretious patterns of wiſdome as God hath ſet before you, of ſuch I mean as began but ignorantly, yet by their diligence have attained to much light and hope, much godly ſorrow & unfained deſire after Chriſt. Tread in their ſteps, and get you under the ſame condition of grace alſo, and let your vanities, pleaſures & baſe hearts be renounced, with eaſe, and love of your luſts, which have hitherto kept you in ſlightneſſe and ſapleſſeneſſe, and dalliance with grace; learne to eſteem matters of weight weightily. But as for the ſecond, To quench that Spirit of grace which formerly hath ſtriven with you, and ſtirred up motions in you to take hold of God, beware of it; if you be guilty, labour to recover that Spirit againe ere it be damped, leſt your hearts be given over to ſuch a frame as will not be ſoftned, nor wrought upon: And try the ſoundneſſe of ſuch affections, as the word hath wrought in you, that you may not decay and loſe your labour, but get a full reward. And ſo much for this.

Luke 11.23. Matth. 25.29.

1 Theſ.5.15.

2 Joh.8.

Vſe 3. Bleſſe God for bringing us under the condition of his grace.

Thirdly and laſtly, let this exhort all ſuch poore ſoules as the Lord hath brought under the condition of the promiſe, both to bleſſe God for it, and to improve it wiſely for their owne encouragement to proceed on to the grace of beleeving. Be heartened to truſt God who hath brought you thus far, that he will not forſake his work till it be finiſhed. Many ſtops I told you of before in the firſt Doctrine upon this verſe, which aſſault poore Chriſtians under the condition: I will name them no more, looke there and read them; let none of them come betweene barke and tree to defeat your faith and converſion: As once a noble man having his picture drawne faire, wrote underneath, (One thing ſtill remaines, to dye well:) So ſay you, Hitherto Lord thou haſt holpen me, and brought me under a condition of mercy; now Lord give me thy perfecting grace too, the upper and nether ſprings, (as *Caleb* to *Achſah*) ſuffer me not now in the haven to make ſhipwracke, but give me thy hand, helpe me well over this laſt hill, that ſo I might be paſt all danger; this one thing remaines to ſet the faire Crowne of faith upon the ſhoulders of the condition thereof, and the worke is at an end. But together with thy ſeeking

Judg.1.

king of God (for he will be ſought for it, Ezek. 36. end) quicken up thy ſpirit to looke for it, and lot upon it, that he will doe it for thee. If ſuch a one as is under the condition of the promiſe, may and ought to faſten upon the promiſe, and caſt himſelfe upon it: argue for thy ſelfe from this ground, and plead for faith as thine owne portion. The miſery of the moſt hearers is this, That they live in a perpetuall pudder & uncertainty between theſe two rocks, Whether they are under the condition or no: or if ſo, then whether they can beleeve or no. Therefore doe one thing at once: Firſt, hold thy ſelfe cloſe to the condition, if thou be under it, and let not the Divell, nor thy own feares pull thee from it. It is that portion which God hath alotted thee as a pledge of more. Theſe are the Suburbs of Hope, to bring thee into the City. Perhaps thou ſayeſt, Thou haſt nothing at all wrought in thee. As for the ſorrow and deſire which are in thee, alas! thou makeſt nothing of them, but compareſt thy ſelfe with them who have gotten beyond thee: But learne to ſay, It is mercy that I have any thing, that I breathe in the aire, that I am not in hell: But much more to enjoy a deſire after mercy. I tell thee thou mayſt plead for it: For why? Mourners for their ſinne, and thirſters for Gods favour, have a promiſe to bee comforted and ſatisfied: they want nothing ſave to beleeve it. Oh then, ſee thy priviledge, and make uſe of it!

2 Kings

Plead hard for faith, if once we be under the condition.

Do not ſay, The Lord may yet leave me: for I do not beleeve as yet, I may dye ere that day: Much leſſe, give place to thy ſullenneſſe, wearineſſe and diſcontent. It is ſaid of *Manoahs* wife, that when her husband abuſed the condition of a promiſe made unto them, and ſaid, We ſhall dye: She replied, No husband: If the Lord had meant to have ſlaine us, he would never have appeared unto us thus: and how ſhould we have a ſonne, if he ſlay us? So ſhouldſt thou argue againſt thy feares, becauſe the Lord doth nothing in vaine, therefore he will give me faith in deed. Nay, hold faſt, and cloſe to the condition, as thou wouldeſt reach the promiſe. So did *Eliſha* in another caſe, when *Elija* told him, that he had asked an hard thing, to have his Spirit doubled upon him: yet, if he ſaw him aſcending, he ſhould have it: what did he? Did he breake the condition? Did hee goe aſide, and leave his company? No, although hee were ſollicited ſtrongly to it, yet hee ſweares, As the Lord liveth, I will not leave thee till I muſt needs: For why? There lay a great iſſue upon it, the forgoing or enjoying of a double Spirit of his Maſter: Therefore to ſhew how hee cloſed with the charge at their parting, he cryed, My Father, my Father, and ſo obtained the Promiſe. So doe thou; hold that thou haſt, and let none pull it away; but by the triall of what thou haſt already got, learne to truſt God the better for that which ſtill is wanting, and ſuffer none of thy ſtaggerings to bereave thee. *Eliah* having tried *Eliſha* three or foure times to leave him, and not prevailing; lo at laſt hee granted his deſire. When that woman of Canaan had gotten a condition by the end, *viz.* That Chriſt came to ſave the loſt ſheep of Iſrael, whereof ſhe (although a Dogge in account) tooke her ſelfe to bee one, and would not be beaten off by all our Saviour his buffetings, at laſt ſhee ſped: Since there is no remedy, ſaith Chriſt, but thou wilt have thy petition granted,

2 Kings 2. 6.

Verſe 16.

Matth. 15.

2 Kings

granted, take it. Sure it is, the Lord will try thee of what metall thou art made, if he meane to truſt thee with faith. If any thing will beat thee off, or make thee ſubſiſt and ſtop ere faith bee wrought in thee ſoundly: if onely a condition will ſerve thy turne, and thou art content there to reſt, thou art not fit for Gods battell. Even as God tried the lappers of water from the ſoopers of it, for *Gedeon*: ſo will he try thee. Be wiſe therefore, and ſo hold the condition, as yet underſtanding, that the excellency thereof ſtands rather in her relation, then in her ſelfe: for if it could be, that faith might be ſevered from deſire or ſorrow, it were not poſſible for thee to be happy. But to ſever them in the elect, it is not poſſible. And thus much may ſerve to have ſpoken of the former part of the doctrine, to wit, the condition of a promiſe, and the uſes thereof. Now the ſecond and chiefe ſcope of the Doctrine, and the uſes thereof, remaine, viz. that ſuch an one muſt caſt himſelfe upon the promiſe for pardon and life. Of the uſes hereof in order: for this is the maine point.

Judg. 6.

2 Part.

Vſe 1. Terror to all carnall ones, that ſavour not the ſpirituallneſſe of faith.

And firſt, ſince it is ſo: This point of the duty of Faith, the moſt ſpirituall grace and thing in the world: is ſtrong terrour to all thoſe who are ſo far from cloſing and caſting themſelves upon a Word, that alas! they are farre from ſo much as conceiving, or reaching what manner of thing faith is, or what it meanes to cleave and caſt our ſelves upon the bare Word of God (without any other mixture) for ſalvation. Alas! they think they were as good caſt away themſelves altogether, as to purpoſe it. Tell us not (ſay they) of ſuch ſpirituall matters as theſe, they are above our reach and capacity: wee are plaine folke, commit not ſuch riddles to us, we forget them as faſt: we love ſuch things as we ſee, feele, taſte, and handle: If yee will tell us a tale, or play a jigge, or ſhew us a play and fine ſights, or ſing ſonnets in our eares; if you will bring us to merry company, or a feaſt, if you will ſhew us ſome new faſhion, or if you will helpe us to a good bargaine, where we may put out our money to uſe, for eight in the hundred, or tell us of a warme match for my Sonne or Daughter: if you will ſhew us how we may get the day of our adverſary, or if you can tell us of ſome curious project for gaine; or but talke with us about our corne, or croppe of hoppes: theſe have ſome tack and ſavour in them: there we will be for you: Or if to drinke and ſwagger all day and night at the pot, or Tobacco, have at you: theſe things taſte with us, here you have us tied by the ſenſe, and carnall wit can reach them: But alas! we know not what you meane when you ſpeake of ſuch high learning, as to caſt our ſelves upon the Word for pardon. O yee brutiſh creatures! read *Gallio's* anſwer to the Jewes in *Pauls* caſe: O yee Jewes, if you brought unto me a caſe of right or wrong, I would heare and anſwer you; but as for your queſtions of ſuperſtition, and your ſects and devotion, I will have nought to doe with you, get you from the Barre. Art not thou ſuch a Swine? Nay, I doe *Gallio* wrong to compare thee with him: for he was not onely a learned man, and good Juſticer, but (as appeares by ſtory) a deep Moraliſt, onely abhor'd what he thought ſuperſtitious. But thou as a bruit beaſt (as *Iude* ſpeakes verſ. 10. and 19.) doeſt defile thy ſelfe in the things which thou ſhouldſt know, being

Acts 18.14.

ing ſenſuall, and not having the Spirit. We (ſay they) know what it meanes to caſt our ſelves upon a good Counſellor at Law in our ſutes or a Phyſitian in our diſeaſes, or our friends that are well monied when we are to pay our debts, nay ſometimes good witches to doe us a good turne in our cattell; ſuch things as theſe are better bottomes to us: As for a word of God, or a promiſe, tuſh! as good offer a chip to an hungry dogge, as theſe matters to our palate: Oh wofull Idolaters! Are you ſo carnally beſotted with the creature, ſo ſenſuall that no ſavour of a word can pierce you?

As it was with thoſe Iſraelites, Exod. 32. This *Moſes* our ſpirituall man (ſay they) is gone up to God in the mount, he is too heavenly a creature for us, we love to ſee our God, and to kiſſe him, and dance before him, to feaſt and be merry, and ſo doing, we are content to thanke him for our deliverance out of Egypt; even ſuch an one art thou: Thou loveſt Religion too, perhaps thou art an ace beyond them I ſpake of; But thou wouldeſt have it ſtand in thine owne way to be a morall civill man, to follow thy trade, to pay every man his owne, to give almes to the poore, to love devotion, to keepe thy Church, and live in the Towne as a good neighbour: This we love, and feele ſome bottome in it too: But as for caſting our ſelves upon a bare word of God, or making that a reall foundation for our ſoules to reſt upon: God helpe us, we know not how to feele our feet under us; you ſeem to bid us hang in the aire, and to ſubſiſt upon nothing. Ah wofull wretches! we bid you ſubſiſt upon no leſſe or weaker bottome then that whereupon the world depends, even the Sea and the Earth and the Heavens, Heb. 11.2. and 1.2. and the creature whereon you dote, all were framed by this word, and by the power of it are ſupported: And is this ſo ſenſeleſſe to conceive of, that this word of power and faithfulneſſe ſhould ſupport you? As *Paul* told them, ſo much more you, (though as heatheniſh as they) Is this ſo ſtrange unto you that the dead ſhould ariſe? That by caſting your ſelves upon the word, you ſhould look for ſalvation? Is that only ancient way of God ſo trodden by all both Patriarkes, Prophets, Apoſtles and people of God from *Adam*, till now ſo uncouth and ſo diſmall a thing unto you? Beware, leſt you prove to be ranke *Eſau's*, Gargazites, and ſuch as *Peter* in 2 Epiſt. 3. Chap. ſpeakes of Atheiſts, who would beleeve no more then they ſay: Where (ſay they) is the promiſe of his comming? For all theſe things are as they were from the beginning! Oh wofull ones! How righteous were it with God to leave ſuch as favour not his way, but live by ſenſe, even to a deſperate way of diſtruſt, not to truſt that they ſee, but to be drown'd in infidelity? hath not the Lord Jeſus convinced thy ſenſuall heart by ſenſuall arguments? If thy ſenſe were not left-handed, thou mightſt with thy right hand beare downe thy infidelity; for God hath given aſſurance ſufficient by his Sonne unto thy very ſenſe, if thou wert not brutiſh? Hath he not ſent Majeſty downe from Heaven to be a worme, a ſervant, to worke out pardon and ſalvation here upon earth, was he not ſeene, handled, and converſed with a long ſpace? See 1 Joh. 1.1. and Heb. 2.2. 3.4. were not his active ſervices, & alſo his ſufferings manifeſt to the eyes of all men?

1 Cor. 15.10.

2 Kings

men? And may not promiſes grounded upon ſo reall, ſenſible and convincing demonſtrations, claime credit at thy hands? Doſt thou eſteem a word, a promiſe, ſo darke and farre off, when the word is come ſo neare thee, even into thy mouth and heart to doe it? Ah poore wretch! is not he able to provide thee earth by his word, who thereby hath purchaſed heaven for thee? Is there nothing but the creature, the creature which will down with thee? Is this the burthen which hangs on ſo faſt, and doth ſo much inchant thee that thou canſt not caſt it off freely and roundly, to caſt thy ſelfe upon the promiſe.

Application of the terror.

Well, take heed then leſt God plague thee in that very thing wherein thou haſt ſin'd againſt his promiſe: I meane thy diſtruſt. I tell thee many ſad ſpectacles there have beene among us or about us of them, who have beene plagued by God in their owne kinde; ſome of great eſtate, who yet thought they ſhould dye beggars; others diſtracted, and ſaying, that their wife was none of theirs, their houſes, cattell and ſervants, were none of theirs, no wealth they had was their own, they had no right to it: Sometimes they have waited whiles they ſhould be carried away quicke, and never more be ſeene in their houſes, or that the earth ſhould cleave under them, and ſwallow them up, or that the King would ſeaze upon their eſtates, and bereave them of all they are worth: Others have beene caſt into feares that they ſhould dye in ſuch a fearefull ſort, as never did any, and bee made examples for all the Country to wonder at: Others have died of very conceit, that they were out of favour with their Prince and Country: Others are troubled with diſtruſtfull fancies, *viz.* That they ſhould die ſuddainly, or that they ſhould be forſaken of all helpe and left to ſhift: And others ordinarily will ſay, I doubt I have enemies who will accuſe me of treaſon, and undoe my children, or take their oaths againſt me for ſome mortall offence: Others who have boaſted much of their skill, and what they have gotten, will ſay, what if I ſhould loſe mine eyes, or bee taken lame in my hands or feet, or unable to get my living, or lye upon my poore husbands hand till we bee not worth a groat, with a thouſand ſuch crotchets? Are not theſe juſt plagues of old unbeleefe? Doe not men upon their death beds, cry out, It is juſt with God thus to handle me, for I never could truſt him, nor his word, further then I ſaw, felt and taſted him! Oh, God hath met with you! Did he not threaten the deſpiſers of his Law with aſtoniſhment of heart, with hanging by the eye-lids, an heart of heavineſſe & ſorrow, ſaying in the morning, would God it were evening, & in the evening, would it were morning! Read Deut. 29. that roll of curſes; what anguiſh of heart, fears & perplexities the Lord threatens to ſend upon ſuch as applauded themſelves in their rotten peace, and the ſtubborneneſſe of their unbeleefe? Surely we may thinke then, its juſter to ſmite them that have abuſed his Goſpell with ſpirituall penalties, making a ſcourge of their owne cords! And yet all this will not ſerve to drive men out of their prophaneneſſe, and dallying with the word; ſtill they will cavill againſt faith, and ſay, Tuſh, theſe men of the Spirit would have all men like to themſelves; but we cannot bee ſo heavenly, our time is not yet come, when God will it ſhall be, and

Judgements of God upon carnall and wilfull unbeleevers.

Note well.

till

till then, tis but folly for us to ſtruggle, we will doe what lies in us, and put our helping hand to Gods, and then hope the beſt. Others tell the Miniſter, they thinke it is impoſſible for any to know themſelves happy in this life; or if it be not, yet it is very difficult, or very unlikely: Oh ſay they, we cannot forgoe ſuch a luſt, or ill cuſtome; and this faith will bereave us of all our ſweet pleaſures and liberties; we ſhall never have done with it, if we once beginne, others come by it eaſilyer then we, we are dull ſchollers: poore men muſt doe as they may, and cannot follow this learning ſo hard, our buſineſſe and worke hinder us, and our memories are ſhallow, we ſee theſe beleevers are as little ſet by among men as any, a thouſand of theſe baſe cavills men have. But remember that theſe vanities will make you forſake your mercy at laſt, and then he that will bring you but once word to reſt upon in your horrors, ſhould be as one of a thouſand: but then it will be too late, then terrible ſentences will come into your thoughts, That he who made them, will not ſave them, and he who formed them will ſhew them no mercy: And then ſhall that bee verefied, Acts 13.40. Behold ye deſpiſers, wonder and vaniſh! I worke a worke in your dayes, which if one tell you of, you will not beleeve; you that wilfully ſtopt your eares againſt Gods word before, ſhall now wiſh you could ſee the truth and beleeve it, but if you would give a world for it, it ſhall be denyed you. If there bee any ſparke of ſenſe in you, let this move you! elſe you ſhall then catch at a word of God to comfort you, but none ſhall be granted you: So much for this firſt Uſe.

Jonah 2.8.

Eſay 27.11.

A ſecond Uſe is Inſtruction, to teach us the moſt pretious and excellent nature and prerogative of faith. For the nature of it, wee ſee this only, and no other grace is allotted the ſoule for this end, to faſten and take hold upon the Word and Promiſe: As the Word is the only thing which beares witneſſe unto us of good, and his way to heaven, (for we ſee nothing, as *Peter* ſpeakes, yet beleeve) ſo, the onely gift to caſt the ſoule upon this word is faith. And therefore it is the off-ſpring of God, that grace which hath the birthright of all the reſt, and is the *Reuben* and ſtrength of God, ſuch a one as if the Lord would even ſtudy how to dwell with us, and in us, (as wiſdome ſaith in the Proverbs, She delights to inhabit with men) yea, how to make us partakers of the divine nature, and reſtore his Image in us, he could not doe it by any other ſo excellent a grace, as by this of faith: Therefore Eſay 57. its called the creation of God, (I create the fruit of the lips, peace; if the daughter, peace, then much more the mother, Faith:) its that grace which onely can ſay as *Iob* did, I have eſteemed the words of his mouth; it counts one word or promiſe of God as a deed done; for faith is, when that is done which is ſpoken, it gives a realneſſe and being to the word and promiſe: and as you ſee a mould preſently faſhions the mettall according to it ſelf, juſt like it; and as the ſeale printing upon the ſoft wax leaves that impreſſion upon it, which it beares it ſelfe: even ſo it is with faith, it faſhions it ſelfe according to the mould of the word, and beares the ſame ſtampe upon it, which the ſeale of the word bare: looke upon the one, and be-

Verſe 2.
Inſtruction 1. Branch. The nature of Faith is moſt pretious.
1 Pet.1.8.

Prov.8.31.

2 Pet.1.3.

Job 23.12.

2 Kings

hold the other. Nay its the inſtrument of the Spirit, without which it workes not. As *Samuel* ſaid to *Iſhai* of *David*, ſend for him, for wee can doe nothing till he come: So till faith come into the ſoule to bee the organ of the Spirit, to worke in us by it, alas, the Spirit is a ſtranger to our ſoules! Its that coale from the Altar wherewith the Lord touches and inſpires the ſoule; the ſoule is the life of the body, and faith is the ſoule and life of the ſoule, cauſing it ſo much to excell it ſelfe, as an Angel doth a man. Briefly, the word is a dead letter to us, if faith make it not a powerfull word, a word of life in us. Its that which cauſeth out of the belly of the ſoule (even as water from a ſpring) to flow rivers of waters of eternall life; even of peace through pardon and of joy unſpeakable and glorious. By it as *Peter* ſaith, Moſt great and pretious promiſes are given to us: ſo that if that hand that taketh rich gifts be a pretious hand, then ſurely ſo is faith which only receives the gift of Chriſt, and all he hath, and hoardeth them in the ſoule: That Chriſt Eph. 3. 14. may dwell in your heart by faith: That you may comprehend all love, even the length, depth, and all dimenſions thereof (as fleſh here is able to doe) as all Saints doe: ſaith the Apoſtle. No other grace is ordained to this end, ſave this: It was the inſtrument of receiving Chriſt into the wombe of the Virgin, by which all generations ſhould call her bleſſed, and ſo it is ſtill the ſame ſpiritually, and therefore may ſay as *Mary* did, The Almighty hath magnified me above all my fellow graces. Many daughters have done well, but thou haſt excelled them all.

John 7. 38.

1 Pet. 1. 8.
2 Pet. 1. 2. 3.

Luke 1. 38. ver. 48.
Prov. 31. 29.

2. Branch. Prerogative of Faith.

And ſecondly, the prerogative of faith is ſutable to her nature: for although many things are very pretious in nature, as jewells which excell in luſtre and brightneſſe, which yet equall not the price with any reall uſe; yet this pretious grace is as uſefull alſo, and therefore well might *Salomon* ſay, and ſo *Iob* alſo, She is more pretious then Rubies, and the Topaz of Ethiopia ſhall not bee taken for her. And that appeares by this, that ſhe is the doer of all in all in the ſoule, both for light, direction and ſtrength. Firſt, for light: as the Sunne is firſt ſubject of naturall light in the world: So is Faith in the ſupernaturall divine light in the ſoule. And is to the whole man as our Saviour ſpeakes of the eye, if it be light, then is the whole body light, the hand, the foote, the members are all light, if the eye be cleare. And as the Ephod or Urim were to the Prieſt, ſo is faith to the ſoule, even the oracle of it, and conceives the deep things of God, and reveals them to us, to whom before they were hidden. And if it be true (as its moſt true) that we know no more in Gods matters then wee beleeve; then ſurely faith is the key of all true and ſaving knowledge in the ſoule. Then alſo ſhe is the directreſſe of the ſoule. As ſervants from the Maſter or Miſtreſſe; ſo doe all the graces of the Spirit receive direction from the gift of faith. As in a ſhip each boy hath his taske, ſome to row with oares in the boat, others to climb the ſhreeds, to pumpe, to ſtop the leaks, ſome to attend the ſteridge, but all receive direction from the boatſwaine, he orders them and their works: So Faith workes not every thing immediately in the frame of a Chriſtian, ſhe hath abundance of workemen: and as the Centurion ſaid to his,

In ſundry reſpects.

1.

Matth. 6. 22.

2.

his,

his, ſo Faith ſaith to hers, Doe this, ſuffer this, conquer this, come, goe, and they all obey. If a croſſe come; goe Patience, endure it: If a bleſſing; come Sobriety, uſe it temperately, as if thou didſt not uſe it: If any duty of mercy to ſoule or body to be done, Charity and Liberality muſt doe them: If any hard taske, then Wiſedome, Diligence, or Selfe-deniall muſt ſtep forth: and to theſe Faith gives their charge, and orders their worke. Thirdly, ſhe is the ſtrength of all other graces of the Spirit. As all ſinewes are from the braine, all Arteries from the heart, all veines from the liver, thence they derive their originall, and all that activity which they exercile in the body: So, all the graces of the Spirit fetch their being and ſupport from Faith: Shee is the ſeed of God in the Soule, and ſhe is the ſtrength of God alſo. His ſeed, becauſe whatſoever divineneſſe is in the gift of patience, long-ſuffering, thankfulneſſe, mercy, love, hope of ſalvation, it comes from the fountaine of Faith. She is the Merchant Royall, & all other Chapmen have their wares from her Store-houſe. Then ſhe is the ſtrength alſo of God in all graces. Whatſoever thou ſeeſt excellent in a Chriſtians frame or graces, if thou hadſt an eye to ſee, thou ſhouldſt behold them all in one faith: out of whoſe Forge and Anvill they are all formed.

2 Kings

3. 1 Joh. 3.9.

For why? Faith taking hold of Gods maine ſtrength to ſave, carries away all his ſtrength to obey: if God will ſave me, ſurely hee deſerves my love, my patience: and ſurely hee and his love will put mee forth, and uphold me in doing for him, in curbing my paſſions, in mortifying my Giant-like corruptions, the great ſonnes of *Anak*, thoſe Emims and Zanzummims, which are above all the reſt in fierceneſſe and ſtrength. So that now mark, this Doctrine of Faith, caſting the Soule upon the Word and Promiſe for pardon and life, argues the moſt excellent nature and prerogative of faith above all other. It is evident by this, whatſoever the Lord workes in man, he workes by the Word and the Spirit: and whatſoever theſe two act in the ſoule, they act it by faith, as their onely inſtrument: ſo that Faith is the onely Intelligencer to the Soule, from the Spirit and from Heaven: and that grace which is maintained as agent for God in the ſoul. No other gift is ſo. As hee ſaith of the ſhip, that there are in it, many who do needfull works, but the Pilot doth all in all: he doth not ſo ſordid works as they, but he doth greater and better: for he ſits at the ſterne, and guides the courſe of the Ship into the Haven: the other are but ſubordinate, but ſhee is principall: ſo I may ſay of Faith and other graces, all of them conferre to the well-being of a Chriſtian; but faith to the being. The Ship boyes ſtop leakes, and row with Oares, but they doe not the great worke of guiding the Ship by Card and Compaſſe, till ſhe come at land: So all that which any grace of the Spirit doth, that faith doth: But faith doth ſomewhat which they doe not, nor can doe: Nay, faith is faine to cover all the defects of other graces, to ſave them harmleſſe, and to beare their chin above water from ſinking. As we ſee that the Shield is not onely armour to fence the body, but alſo to fence off blowes and affronts from all the armour it ſelfe, ſo that the dint come not at the head-peece, or corſlet, or the reſt. Onely faith brings the Lord Jeſus into the ſoule, to doe all her workes in her, and for her; and when

2 Cor. 5.8. Eſay 26.12.

4.

5.

6. Epheſ. 6.16.

2 Kings

all is done, to pardon the wants, and to cleanſe away the ſpots thereof, by cloathing her with that robe, under which God ſeeth no deformity to impute or puniſh it. To conclude, I ſay (brethren) that I preſſe this purpoſely, that as I have ſpoken much of thoſe things (in this Book) which tend to faith: ſo, I would perſwade you to thinke no paines too great to beſtow in the getting thereof; becauſe this grace being once gotten, to caſt the ſoule upon the Word and Promiſe; yea, God himſelfe in Chriſt. By this meane, ſhe hath all, becauſe ſhe encloſeth him who is all in all: in whom are hidden all the treaſures of wiſdome, who is the fulneſſe of God, in whom we are complete. And ſo much may ſerve for this uſe.

Vſe 2. Of Inſtruction.

Another uſe of inſtruction may be to give us ſome further light into the ſubſtance of this grace of faith, by ſhewing you of what ingredients the receit is made, or of what parcels it conſiſts. And they are two: The former, deniall of our ſelves: The latter, reſigning up of the ſoule to Gods Word. For, to caſt the ſoule upon the promiſe, implies both theſe. Selfe-deniall then firſt, is one parcell of this grace: For why? It is impoſſible that the ſoule ſhould caſt it ſelfe upon a Word, till ſhe have caſt off all weights and clogges, which might hold backe and with-draw her from this free and full giving up her ſelfe to God.

Faith hath two parts.

1. Self denial.

Simile.

I make this plaine by a ſimilitude: A Clergie man hath a Benefice, which by his errour is fallen into the lapſe: if hee will ſtill plead a true right by his preaching of his Sermons, or ſerving Cure, he loſeth his living, or if his ſtomacke be too great to confeſſe the lapſe. But if he will acknowledge his lapſe, and have his friend ready in the Court to begge it of the King, to whom it is fallen, hee may poſſibly ſave the lapſe, and recover his living with a better title then at firſt. So here, Grace is fallen into the lapſe, by *Adams* and thy ſinne: by this the right of it is forfeit into the hand of the King of heaven: if thou wilt now confeſſe the forfeit, and renounce thy crazie title, if thou wilt reſigne it up into the Kings hand, going to thy friend the Lord Jeſus to begge it for thee againe, thou mayſt have it better confirmed then ever. Elſe, if thou plead thine owne righteouſneſſe, thou loſeſt Gods.

Simile.

Another Simile: As it is in the marriage union, A woman cannot wholly reſigne up herſelfe to a man, except ſhe wholly be free from all her own cavils and exceptions which might hinder her reſolution. If either her minde ſtand to live a virgin (as diſtaſting the married eſtate in generall:) or if ſhe like it, but yet refuſe, except ſhee may have her owne ends, reſerve ſtroke in her owne hand, to diſpoſe of that ſhe hath, or have ſuch and ſuch liberties, to goe and doe as her liſteth: or if ſhee feele the yoke of ſubjection heavie to her, and will be eaſed of it: or if ſhe diſlike the perſon or qualities of the party, or his abilities, or breed & parentage, or trade & calling: any of theſe are ſufficient to hold her ſpirit off, and to uſe her freedome, & live ſingle: Even ſo here: Till Self and ſelfe-ends be all borne down by the ſtreame of grace and the promiſe, there is no poſſibility for the ſoule to yeeld up her ſelfe, and reſigne her liberty. That which they ſpeake in Joh. 8.33. Wee are *Abrahams* children, & were never bound unto any, is the voyce of every baſe heart: which though it ly in the deepeſt ſlavery, yet thinkes her ſelfe

ſelfe free: becauſe that chaine is ſweet by cuſtome, and becomes even as deere as life it ſelfe: And to bee broken off from it, is more bitter then death. Oh! every one thinkes thus, Now I am alive to my will and luſts: If once my necke bee under the coller of Chriſt, I muſt ſtoope, farewell then all my liberty. But till the ſoule bee brought to ſee that in the promiſe which will equall ſuch carnall liberties, and recompence them with an hundred fold in a better kinde, ſhee will never be perſwaded to deny her ſelfe. Shee ſees her ſelfe warme in her neſt, feeles no want, loves her eaſe, and therefore will not out of her track.

Rom. 7. 9.

And hence it is, Pſal. 45. that *Salomon* tells *Pharaoh's* daughter (in the name of the Church) that if ſhee will forget her ſelfe, her Idols, and heatheniſh heart, her fathers houſe and contents, her private wealth and honour, that ſhe may wholly bee his, and according to his heart, in her prizing him for himſelfe, and for his meere love, above all other delights: if ſhe will bee ſubject to him, and deny her owne name and will, then ſhe ſhould bee a wife for him, and hee would delight in her love, not elſe: So, that reſigning up her ſelfe wholly to bee at his diſpoſe, was one maine peece of the marriage. Even ſo is it here, That ſoule which will enter league with God, and caſt her ſelfe upon him for pardon and life, muſt wholly ceaſe to be her owne, and come under both the name and authority of another, or elſe ſhee equivocates and lies to the holy Ghoſt, worſe then *Ananias* did. Firſt, that averſe heart in generall to the match, muſt be taken off; that contrariety and diſtaſte of converſion and Chriſtianity, muſt be abandoned. Rebellion againſt the way of God muſt be abhorred: then all quarrels againſt God, the conditions of a regenerate perſon, the difficulties, the croſſes annexed to it, muſt bee devoured. All the ſoules mixtures, both in the way of beleeving, and obedience afterward, muſt bee pared away. All her owne duties, performances, labours, zeale, devotion, religion, morality, all her affections bred in her from her owne ends, muſt bee forfeit: She muſt be content that Grace honour her ſelfe with the only ſtroke in the worke of converſion: if ſhe beare not all the ſway, ſhe will beare none at all. Now if any of theſe ſticke in her ſtomacke, if ſhe be willing to have the fat and ſweet, but ſhee will have none of the ſoure: ſhe is ſtill within her owne bounds, and cannot freely reſigne up her ſelfe to the promiſe: for Selfe and the Word are directly contrary. No ſoule will caſt her ſelfe upon a bare word of God, but that which hath firſt renounced all that might really give her content without it. And therefore (to finiſh) ſuch a ſoule puts her ſelfe out of her owne diſpoſe, and ſubmits her ſelfe to be at the diſpoſe of God, to doe with her as he pleaſes, according to that which in his word hee hath revealed himſelfe to be willing to doe. She deſires that ſhe might bee more willing to have God glorified in his owne way, and honoured in his mercy, then to enjoy pardon and heaven in her owne way. And although it bee not the caſe of every weake ſoule to come thus farre, becauſe that which drawes the ſoule firſt to ſeeke God, is her owne pinch of guilt and curſe, and her deſire of forgiveneſſe & peace: yet her entire deſire is, to caſt her ſelfe ſo farre upon the bare word of God,

To be brought to an utter ſtrait, and a forlorne condition, is one ingredient of faith.

2Kings

that if that can faile, ſhe is willing to periſh: and as ſhe growes in light and ſtrength, ſhe is glad to be informed what the ſcope and purpoſe of any truth of God is; and being ſo, ſhee deſires to ſtoop to it moſt humbly and entirely, that (whatſoever become of her owne) yet Gods will may be done in her and by her. And this may ſerve briefly to ſhew what the firſt part of faith imports, that is, Selfe-deniall. I have oft ſpoken of it before. Thus much here may ſerve.

2 Part. Reſignation. Reſigning up of the ſoule to God, is a ſecond ingredient of faith.

The ſecond thing in faith is, Reſignation of her ſelfe to God. This is, when God is fully and wholly that unto the ſoule, which before Selfe was, or any thing in the world wherein her content ſtood. Conſider (good brethren) I ſpeake of a weighty thing, and not for diſcourſe ſake: Perhaps you may thinke I goe to deepe, and indeed ſo I doe, for a carnall fleet heart; howbeit no truth of God muſt bee concealed to pleaſe our baſeneſſe: therefore to caſt and reſigne up the ſoule to God, is neither more nor leſſe then to lot upon the Lord in the promiſe, to become that unto the Soule, which before Selfe and the world was in the uttermoſt of her profits and pleaſures, luſts and vanities, which gave her that ſatisfaction which ſhe deſired. Oh (good friends) that neither I nor you might utter and heare that in a few ſentences, which perhaps all our life hath ſcarcely reacht unto: For, I tell you plainly, ſuch a ſpeech as this, might well ſet us both upon ſcanning how the caſe ſtands with us. Wee all know what our owne ends, what the world, the pleaſures of it, the luſt of the heart, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life, have been unto us: Surely, as our eye and right hand. Tell me now: Are any of us ſo caſt upon the word of God and thoſe qualities of a promiſe before named, faithfulneſſe, conſtancy, lovingneſſe, freedome, and the reſt, that wee can venture all our welfare thereon? That God will ſo alſufficiently ſupply us, that both all our former unlawfull liberties and contents, ſhall bee as meere loſſe and dung to us, and wee ſhall think our ſelves never the worſe? Againe, that all meet and lawful contents ſhall be miniſtred unto us, and that by a promiſe? Laſtly, that if ought bee denied us, which may ſeeme deſirable, wee ſhall therefore not thinke it meet, becauſe God gives it not (for elſe his love could beteame it) and if wee muſt want it, yet even therein we ſhall abound; becauſe wee have his promiſe, that it ſhall bee an hundred for one; Yea, and that wee ſhall eſteeme the preſence of God, his favour, peace of heart in forgoing a bleſſing, or patience in bearing a croſſe, greater gaine (by farre) then to have had our wills in kinde? Truly (brethren) to have God that unto us which before other things were, is not leſſe then I have ſpoken: and yet ſo is God to that poore ſoule which hath caſt her ſelfe upon him for pardon and life: for hee who will not faile in the greateſt, will not faile in the ſmaller. Marke then, Faith in caſting her ſelfe upon the promiſe, is an hard grace, but yet wiſe: ſhee will loſe nothing in the Hundred, but ſhee will get in the Shire: and ſhe is warranted ſo to doe by the Lord, who will have her know, if ſhe will be ruled by him, and truſt his word, ſhe ſhall be no loſer, but an infinite gainer; yea, and know it alſo, to her great content, though now and then mixt with ſome doubtings and weakneſſe.

1 Joh.2.16. Matth.18.9.

When as God is to the Soule that which formerly Selfe and ſin were, it is a ſigne of reſignation to God.

And

And by this meane the ſoule waxes confident upon God in the promiſe, and by degrees growes to ſee this truth as well in other promiſes, as in the maine: of which I ſhall after ſay ſomewhat. I ſay, faith growes by experience to an holy complacence in God by his promiſe, to be all one with him, acquainted with his truth and bounty, to venture herſelfe and all her happineſſe thereon, and ſo to have ſuch an affiance, and truſt in God, as not eaſily to be unſettled by each deluſion, or conceit of Sathan, or world, or herſelfe: But ſtill in all her ſeeming ſtraits and difficulties to rely upon the promiſe, and to picke out the true meaning thereof, even the length and depth of it; and ſeeing God cannot lye, therefore to wait for reſolution in all doubtfull caſes, rather then raſhly to queſtion the promiſe, and to repent her of her choice. This holy obedientiall affiance and truſt upon God by a promiſe, is that happineſſe of a Chriſtian ſoule, and that true reſt of heart which ſhe ſhould pitch herſelfe upon, as that portion which ſhe counts beſt, an fallen into a goodly ground. It is a good illuſion which *Saloman* or *Batſheba* hath, Prov. 31.11. of the good wife, That the heart of an husband reſts in her, hee is ſo linckt in love and affection to her, ſo experienced in her fidelity, chaſtity, helpfulneſſe and gracefulneſſe, that his heart reſts upon her, and truſts to her: Be the buſineſſe never ſo weighty, be he never ſo farre diſtant from her, let never ſuch conceits and ſuſpitions come in his minde, all are waſht off, the truſt which hee hath in her quits his minde, and hee reſts upon her without caſting any ſcruples. May it bee ſo betweene ſinfull couples, who may be and are in many things unfaithfull, and ſhall not the Lord much more be truſted? Yes doubtleſſe: A true beleeving ſoule goes not to worke by gueſſe, caſts not with herſelfe, what if God ſhould faile her? What if ſhe ſhould bee defeated? But becauſe the promiſe hath ſecured her of Gods unchangeable truth, ſhe takes it, and (as with a knife) cuts in two all ſuch cords of withdrawing feares, and throwes herſelfe upon it; as the anchor is caſt upon the bottome under water, when once the Pilot hath by his plummet ſounded it, and there it ſticks, and holds the ſhip from toſſing too and fro with winde and waves; even ſo doth the ſoule which hath known the Lord, and taken ſure markes of him, knit and faſten it ſelfe upon him, and ſtands not to deſcant off and on, this way and that, but drownes it ſelf once for all in the ſea of his Attributes, no more to be diſtempered by any of her objections. That time which others ſpend in asking, Shall I? Shall I? I could be content, but may I ſafely doe it, and ſhall I be welcome? With the like ſtuffe ſhee ſpends in doing as ſhe is bidden, and hazarding all upon the faithfulneſſe of him, who is the everlaſting ſtrength of Iſrael, and cannot lye. Oh thou wouldeſt caſt thy ſelfe upon the truth of a man, whom thou haſt found to keep touch in his promiſes, and wouldſt bluſh if ſuch an one ſhould caſt thee in teeth that thou didſt diſtruſt his promiſe, having never taken him tardy in any thing. Should a ſinfull man ſo engage thine heart, and ſo ingratiate himſelfe with thee; and ſhall not the Lord much more deſerve it of thee? If ever thou wilt have thy weary wings at reſt, fly to this Arke and ſettle there: Buy and ſell upon the pro-

Simil.

1 Sam. 15. Eſay 26.3.

Gen. 8 9.

2 Kings

promiſe, ſet downe thy ſtaffe there, for this is the way to engage the Lord to thy ſelfe; thou honoureſt him above all honouring by thy faith, and he will for it requite thee, and truſt thee for ever, and bind himſelfe not to leave thee, becauſe he knowes thou makeſt full reckoning of his helpe; thou haſt caſt off all other props of thine owne that he might be inſtead of them all unto thee. Such a one ſhall not need to feare that it ſhall be diſappointed. So much for this Uſe.

Vſe 4. Admonition. Lets of faith to be ſeriouſly ſhunned.

I come in the next place to a briefe Uſe of Admonition to all that would caſt themſelves upon the promiſe, To take heed of ſuch lets as might hinder this their holy reſolution. Somewhat I ſaid about ſuch lets in the firſt Doctrine upon this verſe: Some of more ſpeciall marke in this kinde I have reſerved to this place, which I will ſumme up in few words.

Firſt, reſt not in making many complaints touching thy backward and averſe heart from caſting thy ſelfe upon the word: I doe not bid thee ceaſe complaining, for the Church hath none to moane her, ſave him to whom ſhe complaines. *Ieremy* Cap. 3. brings in *Iuda* complaining, but withall ſhe returnes to God and ſaith, Thou art the Lord our God, and *Ephraim* complaines. Jer.31.33. but withall ſhe is converted, and the Lord calls her his firſt borne, ſo Eſay 63. The Church in Babell ſadly mournes for the hiding of Gods face, but ſhee is reſtleſſe till 64.1. the Lord make the mountaines melt and flow downe that he may helpe her. So doe thou, and proſper. Mourne like *Hezechia*, like a Crane or Dove, but joine his faith to it, and ſay, Hee hath ſaid it, and will doe it. Mourne like *Eſter*, ſo thou doe as *Eſter*, goe into the King, and touch the Scepter, ſaying, I will caſt my ſelfe upon the promiſe, if I perſh there, ſo be it. But elſe as for many complaints to men who are like thy ſelfe, for faſhion, fruitleſſely, and there reſt, without cleaving to the anſwer of thy complaints, & taking counſell; I ſay bite them in, and keepe them to the Lord and thy ſelf in ſecret; for they may puffe thee up with pride and falſe opinion of thy ſelfe, defile thee and harden thee, and hurt others.

Eſay 34. Eſter 2.5.

Secondly, beware of ſloth and dalliance with the Lord, but when the Lord comes neare thee, doe not make thy ſelfe ſure before thou haſt it, and ſo neglect the purſuit and accompliſhment of it, follow him cloſe at the heeles, and ſuffer him not to put thee off, but let him ſee thou art minded to buy and not to cheapen: all commodities have their peculiar ſeaſon to get them in, and ſo hath faith; diſcerne this ſeaſon of the Son of man, thou canſt not make it earlier or later then God makes it, onely marke his day and houre, and make ſure of it then. If the Lord ſee thee to be a pedling chapman, either he will deny it thee wholy, or cauſe thine eaſe to vex every veine in thy heart ere thou have it.

Thirdly, take heed of filling thine heart and thoughts with earthly things; the cares for earth will eat in ſo dangerouſly, and winne upon thee as the ſea tydes gull downe the bankes: They will eat up cares of heaven, as they ſay Eagles feathers will conſume other feathers being mixed with them. Be ſure if thou lay in for faith, come with an heart empty of other thoughts: if thou wouldeſt caſt thy ſelf upon

upon a promiſe, throw not thy ſelfe upon the world, and the contents of it. I ſpeake not of the corrupt world, but of the moſt lawfull liberties; they are apt to ſteale away thy ſpirit eaſilieſt under that colour: marke thy ſelfe if ever the promiſe were more ſavourleſſe to thy taſte, then when the world is ſweeteſt: Be aſhamed to plunge thy ſelf into the creature, when thou pretendeſt a deſire to caſt thy ſelfe upon the word for pardon and life.

Fourthly, and above all, let no bitter roote defile thine heart, and ſpring up to choake thy reſolution this way. It will over droppe all thy purpoſes and mar them. Pride, prejudice, luſt, covetouſneſſe, privy looſeneſſe which the heart will not bee beaten from, any other naughtineſſe will ſo appall and defile the pure gift of faith that it will not come neare where ſuch haunt: Take heed of ſuffering any luſt to get head and overflow knowledge; let not an hollow heart not throughly ſearched, but preſumed to be better then it is, and returning againe after long violent ſuppreſſion, enter in to deſtroy all thy faire hopes; for as ſweet as it is in thy mouth, it will prove gall to thee at laſt, as *Eſau's* prophaneneſſe did, but too late. Heb. 12. 15.

Laſtly, beware of curioſity and ſelf-willedneſſe in Gods way: But humbly trade with him in it, be content with the conditions of his market, both for time and takings: Be not offended at any affronts which befall thee, but ſubmit to his will from whom thou lookeſt for thy cure. If *Naaman* had done thus, he had caſt himſelfe upon Jorden without all this adoe: But becauſe thou wilt frame an Idea to thy ſelfe how thou wouldeſt proceed, and canſt abide no prolongings, no croſſings of thy courſe, becauſe thou art not alway alike in thy affections, but ſometime under hatches, ſometimes in the top ſailes, thou art impatient, and comeſt ſhort of thy deſires. Submit to him who tries all that is in thine heart, that at laſt by thy oft defeats, thou maieſt know, It is not in the willer nor runner, but in him who ſheweth mercy, at whoſe curteſie its meet thou ſtand with all ſubmiſſion, till he have ſubdued thee to himſelfe, and made thee (with *Naaman*) glad to obey and waſh in the Jorden of the Promiſe. Thus much of theſe: like to which are many more, but by theſe judge of the reſt, and caſt off all, if thou wouldſt caſt thy ſelfe upon the promiſe. Deut. 8. 2. Rom. 9. 16.

Fifthly, this is Exhortation to all who are under the Condition, firſt, to obey the command of God, and to caſt themſelves fully upon the promiſe, trying what the iſſue will be. Doe as God bids thee. Conſult not with fleſh. Doe as *Paul*, goe into Arabia the the deſert, goe not to Jeruſalem to diſpute the caſe, when God hath declared his minde to be, that thou reſigne up thy ſoule to his word. Goe not from Gods Nineveh to thine own Tarſus, to thy coſt and ſorrow. As thoſe kine of the Philiſtims went ſtraight on to Bethſhemeſh though lowing after their calves, in token they were more acted by God then by nature, ſo do thou, not turning either to the right hand or the left. There is no danger in this; as we ſay leave is light. Neither is there any other thing in the promiſe then ſeems: There is neither hook nor crook in Gods pure intents. Be thou to him as he to thee. Come in, caſt thy ſelf upon the word, be eaſed, be reconciled to God: Faith is then bred when

Vſe 5. Exhortation. 1. Branch. To obey the command of faith, and to conſent to the promiſe.

2 Kings

Gal. 1. 17. Jona 1. 3. 1 Sam. 6. 12. Matth. 8.

when that is done, which is ſaid; faith is the beſt Diſciple, and moſt dutifull hand-maid that ever was better then thoſe ſervants of the Centurion, which did as they were bidden, came and went at command Caſt the crowne of all thy rebellion at the feet of God. Popiſh Emperours weary of the world, and of all the victories, pomp and ſtate of it, have laid downe their Crowne at an Idols ſhrine, and turn'd votaries. Do thou as a man weary of all thy former delights, caſt them all at Gods feet, and thy ſelfe upon his promiſe. But thou wilt aske me,

To caſt the ſoule upon the promiſe, what itis.

How ſhall I thus throw my ſelfe upon it? I anſwer doe theſe three things: Firſt, take the due eſtimate of the promiſe, and that is done by minding, pondering, familiarizing with it. By minding it, I meane a marking of it, an heeding of it as a thing of no ordinary excellency: Count it as thou wouldeſt the chaire of Eſtate which thou boweſt unto, as repreſenting the Kings perſon. So doth the promiſe, its the chamber of preſence, in which God diſcovers himſelfe, the royall Chaire which carries State in it; when thou beholdeſt it, behold in it the Majeſty of God, which no hypocrite can ſee in it: Its hid-

Eſay 26. 10.

den from his eye: but to a beleever, ſet by God in the clift of the

Exod. 34. 6.

rocke, thence to ſee the glory of God, his graciouſneſſe, and to heare all his good proclaimed: to ſuch an one the promiſe is of a moſt eminent excellency, full of all the fulneſſe of God. Slight it not therefore, but ſet thy marke upon it. Secondly, ponder it, as *Mary* did;

Deut. 32. end

weigh well the contents of it, the bleſſed conſequences of beleeving: Take to conſideration the worth of the pearle, and treaſure hid in the

Luke. 1. 29.

field, as that wiſe Merchant did, Matth. 12. 44. Its as the applying of

Jer. 38. 11.

Ebed-melecs rags under *Ieremies* armeholes, that he might be drawne out with eaſe. Meditation is an heavenly trading of the ſoule in her thoughts and affections with Gods matters till the ſoule claſpe with

Pſal. 119.

them. Thirdly, make the promiſe familiar by this means. Draw thine heart to it, make it thy familiar friend and counſellor to paſſe all thy matters for thee, and in all thy doubts, conſult with it, and let that give

Job 23. 12.

ſentence: And having received it, eſteem the words of the mouth of it as *Iob* did, above thy appointed food; powre all into the boſome of it, as thou wouldſt powre out the ſymptomes of thy diſeaſe into the boſome of thy Phyſitian, or a child all her griefes, loſſes, and ſorrows into the lap of a tender mother. Thou ſhalt fare better by a promiſe, then they ſhall doe at their hands. This is the firſt direction.

Secondly, be under the authority and evidence of a promiſe, and be convinced by it that its thine; that all before ſaid of the ſtrength, wiſdome & other properties of a promiſe, do belong to thee as really, and are put into it by God, that thou mightſt have thy part in them. See clearly as in a mirror, that God intends all to thy ſelfe, and as in the Covenant more generally, ſo in the Seales more particularly. As

Gen. 24 50.

Laban ſeeing how ſtrangely things went, ſaid, We can ſay neither more nor leſſe, but Gods finger is here, it muſt be a match. This is the work of the Spirit of the promiſe alway aſſiſting it, and telling the ſoule under the Condition Doubtleſſe, thou art the party whom God

Eſter 6. 6.

means to ſave: As *Haman* ſaid, whom ſhould the King mean ſave me? So ſhalt thou ſay, (but much more warrantably) If God had not in deed

deed meant me well, he would never have ſo convinced me, and ſet me on ground, that I ſhould have nothing to gainſay. The Judge on the bench ſaw not the theefe ſteale, but by the ſworne evidences of witneſſes he is ſo convinced in himſelfe, that he reads ſentence without queſtion; by this meanes the ſoule brings out Gods cloake, ſtaffe and ſignet as his pledges left in her hand to aſſure her of his good meaning toward her. 2 Kings Gen.38.25.

Thirdly, claſpe unto, and with the promiſe cleave unto it, to bee rid of all thy annoyances at once. Once convinced of the promiſe, and ever faſtned to it. And this cleaving to it is that worke which immediately cauſeth the conſent, and obedience of the ſoule unto it, to caſt it ſelf upon the promiſe, open it thus: The ſoule in the act of beleeving, is ſollicited by Satan and unbeleefe, to give over, and returne to folly: But the promiſe preſſing in, perſwades her to beleeve and renounce her old diſtempers: The ſoule in this demurre conſults with herſelfe thus, If I goe backward, I periſh irrecoverably: If I go forward, I ſee difficulty, yet hope. What then ſhall I doe? Surely I cannot be worſe then I am: I muſt dye however in not beleeving; but in beleeving, I may live: Therefore I will caſt my ſelf upon the promiſe and live. A man will doe thus naturally, though he have no promiſe: Thus did thoſe 9. lepers, 2 King.3. only upon an hazard, they caſt themſelves upon the army of the Aramites: Why? Becauſe they were ſure to dye in the City. So the poore ſoule giving herſelfe for dead, puts her life in her hand, and ſaith, worſe then dead I cannot be; better I may be by a promiſe: Nay, if God be true, I ſhall be; and therefore I will venture my ſoule, and jeopard all upon Gods faithfulneſſe, if I periſh, I periſh in the armes of a promiſe, not in Satans clawes, and by my unbeleefe. In this ſtrife of the ſoule, the Spirit doth lay in ſuch ſtrong weights of perſwaſion againſt the diſſwaſives of corruption, that the ſoule finally is overruled, and ſo conſents and obeyes to caſt herſelfe upon the ſure bottome of a promiſe for pardon and life.

By theſe directions thou maiſt helpe thy ſelfe in this weighty worke; but becauſe the heart is dull upon the ſpurre, let me adde a few motives to quicken thee. Let one be this, Remember firſt, that this will be the iſſue of Gods enquiry at his comming to judgement. Secondly, that by this reſigning up the ſoule to God, the greateſt honour is done to him which by a mortall creature can be. Thirdly, that all ſuch in the day of the Lord ſhall be moſt glorious. Fourthly, that the greateſt wrath and vengeance ſhall light upon the heads of unbeleevers. Fifthly, that this being the rareſt grace of all others in the world, is therefore worth our chiefeſt endeavour. Of theſe and the like I purpoſe (God willing) to treat of the next Lecture. Now for the preſent (having exceeded our ordinary bounds) we will deſiſt here. Let us pray. Motives to Faith.

CHAP.

THE EIGHTEENTH LECTVRE continued upon the 14. VERSE.

VERSE XIV.

Then he went downe and waſhed himſelfe ſeven times in Iordan, and his fleſh came againe as the fleſh of a little child, and he was cleane.

AT the end of the laſt Exerciſe (Brethren) I began to finiſh the firſt and maine Branch of Exhortation, raiſed from this act of Faith, to caſt the ſoule upon the promiſe. To the which end, I added to the directions for the duty, certaine motives: time giving leave onely to name ſuch as came to minde, I have referred the briefe touching of them in ſeverall, to this occaſion.

1. Motive. Faith gives moſt glory to God.

Let the firſt (if you will) be this: That this ſelfe-reſigning grace, above all other, gives moſt glory to God: therefore it is worth the enſuing while we have time. I thinke none will deny, but that which aſcribes moſt to God, and leaſt to man, is the moſt worthy grace to lay in for. But ſuch is this: It is wholly for God, concurres with him in this point of his honour above all. All our obedience to the Morall Law, at once conſidered, glorifies not God ſo much as this: no, although we could performe it exactly, as wee cannot. Partly, becauſe this grace apprehends the perfection of Gods righteouſneſſe, which no holineſſe or righteouſneſſe can reach to. Faith (though weake) yet apprehends the perfection of God, and thereby conformes us to bee like him. Now thats a great honour to God, to reſemble his perfection, and to be perfectly righteous, which only faith in this life apprehends. Partly alſo, for that faith onely acknowledges God in all thoſe Attributes of his, whereby he ſets forth himſelfe in the ſaving of his elect. God aimed at more glory in Redemption, then in Creation: And *Adam* did not ſo much honour God in his integrity, as a beleever doth in the act of his faith: For *Adam* honoured Goodneſſe, but not Juſtice nor Mercy, which the Lord meant eſpecially to ſet forth in Chriſt. Read Rom.

Read Rom.3.25.26. Oh! you may eaſily conceive, how acceptable this work of faith is to God, by a reſemblance: For take an ambitious man, who ſtands more upon his honour then gaine: Who doth moſt pleaſe ſuch a man? Hee that ſends him gifts? No, he ſeeks to have all men bound to him, rather then to be obliged to any. That man is for his tooth, who in great meetings trumpets out his praiſe, tells of his breed, learning, bounty, and generouſneſſe: And if any leſſen his praiſe by compariſon with others, will chalenge him into the field, and ſpend bloud in the defence of it. Oh! how deare is ſuch an one, to a man who ſtands upon it? Even ſuch a man is hee who dare caſt himſelfe upon a promiſe: for hee equals God (in a ſort) in his ends: let God propound to himſelfe in what he will bee honoured, and faith inſtantly concurres and ſaith, True Lord, it is meet, be famous in thy juſtice, ſatisfying it ſelf upon Chriſt: be honored in the wiſedome of thy eternall purpoſe, and thy revealing it in time: receive glory from thy poore creature, for that gracious mercy of thine, that love, that power, and all that unſearchable riches of thine paſt our finding out: Oh! be glorified in all, at the hands of him who yet cannot reach it. To the King immortall, inviſible, and only wiſe God, be all dominion and praiſe. Faith then enlarging it ſelfe to all ſuch qualities as God ſeekes to bee great in, doth exceedingly honour him, and therefore is a grace ſo much the more to be ſought! All ſeeke the face of the Prince, becauſe greatneſſe delights in it. *David* having but a conceit of the contrary in *Mephiboſheth*, was implacable. Get this grace then, that ſo thou mayſt ſet up the Lord, and make him glorious in thine own heart, and in the hearts of all others, as neere as thou canſt.

Rom.11.ult. 1 Tim.1.1.19

Prov.26.19.

2 Sam.19.29

Secondly, let this move thee; When Chriſt ſhall come to judge, the iſſue of his enquiry will be, Whether faith or no faith? I deny not, but he will alſo examine and try every mans worke by fire, and purge the good workes of his from all droſſe which cleaves to them. It is cleare by that in Matth. 25. that hee will take account of all the Talents that he hath lent out: But this ſhall bee the maine iſſue of all, how the maine Talent of the Goſpel hath been improved: that is, whether it have been beleeved or no? It is plaine by Luk.18.9. Thinke you (ſaith Chriſt) that when the Sonne of Man ſhall come to judge the world, he ſhall finde faith upon the earth? That then ſhall bee his inquiſition. And no doubt, that ſhall be then in as great requeſt, as now it is in little. Then a world (if we had it) for a drop of this oyle; but the market is over. Well, let us then make it the great iſſue of our inquiry (if we be wiſe) while it is called to day: If we lay one iſſue, and God lay another, what a wofull loſſe of the day ſhall wee ſuſtaine? Who ſhall recompence our loſſe? God askes for faith, and we bring him in our many Sermons hearing, or prayers making, our duties doing, or Lord, Lord, have we not done great things in thy Name? Then ſhall he anſwer, Depart from me. Will not this bee our hell ere wee come at it? But Faith will paſſe for currant in that day. Therefore uſe all diligence to make that ſure now: It will bee in vaine then to ſay: Alas! I was not aware of this iſſue; if I had, I would not have been to ſeeke.

2. Motive, Chriſts laſt inquiry will be for faith. 1 Cor.3.13.14 Matth.25.

Heb.3.15.

Matth.7.22.

2 Kings

3. Motive. God will be admired in all and onely such as beleeve.

Thirdly, God having found out who these are, will set them forth in that day, to bee wondred at before Men and Angels. This is that which *Paul* speakes, 2 Thess. 1. 10. when he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that beleeve in that day; because our testimony was beleeved. What is it to be admired in all that beleeve? Surely then, God shall make fully knowne the infinite riches of his mercy which he hath discovered, in saving his beleeving ones, when a world of others shall be rejected. How few behold God admirable in the conversion of any? Men have other objects of admiration now to occupy their affections; as, who is the eminent rich man in the Countrey, who get the Kings favour, or bee the greatest for their preferment: These men doe admire. But as for that grace which hath chosen some to be beleevers, leaving thousands of great note and parts, alas! it is slighted as a fancie, and control'd as a falsity: Nay, who are so scorn'd as such? But in that day, those great rich ones, and gallants, shall be despised; and then shall the Lord be admired in beleevers. Here they lye by as wonderments. But there they shall reflect a glory upon God, who hath bestowed such favour upon them, as to give them faith. Oh! happy then those who have kissed the Sonne, Psal. 2. *ult.* It seemes that beleevers shall then bee Masterpeeces, when as the Lord himselfe shall bee glorious in them for his love to them. How shall they then bee glorious in the sight of the world? If *Moses* and *Aaron* were so glorified in the sight of Israel, by reason of the government and Priesthood which God put upon them, and that when as *Kora* and his fellowes had sought to disgrace them, how great shall the honour of beleevers be then, when it shall be some addition to Gods own glory, that he hath made them such? Can God be admired in the choyce gifts of *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, but they must needs be glorious who enjoy them? Oh! then it will be the chiefest honour to be a beleever, then shall it not repent them of any pains they have taken, that they have set to their seale that God is true; Then shall they shine as the starres who have converted others, and have beene converted themselves: Then shall it appeare who are Gods off-spring borne of God, having his seed in them, Kings and Priests to God, His Jewels, his peculiar ones, and Favourites. Doe yee not see how a Prince is admired, who weares a Jewell of peerlesse price upon his hat, or in his ring? Shall a Jewell grace a man, and shall not they bee glorious from whom God receives a kinde of grace? Tell me, whether it were better for us to be these persons, or (with the multitude of wicked ones) to be dazled with their beauty in that day, and to gnaw and bite their tongues for very anguish, that they had not the grace to beleeve the word in season?

Numb. 10. 17.

Exod. 36. 1.

Dan. 12. 3.

1 Pet. 1.

4. Motive. God shall come in vengeance against unbeleevers.

Fourthly, then shall the Lord come in treble vengeance against all that know not God, nor obeyed his Gospel: who put away the Promise from them in a scorne, and made a mocke at his threats, who said to God, Depart from us. Where is now that tongue of yours, which said, 2 Pet. 3. Where is the promise of his comming? Come, let us see this day of the Lord. It shall be a blacke day to you, and you shall wish it as farre off then, as neere before. For then shall the Lord set the true

true colours upon every ſinne, and the moſt terrible upon this. No Thiefe, no Harlot ſhall looke ſo griſely, ſo gaſtly as an unbeliever. Hell ſhall be heat thrice hotter then *Nebuchadnezzars* furnace for all ſuch: There the Sonne of God walked, but here they ſuffer, who have trod under foot the blood of the Covenant, and counted it an unholy thing, and unworthy of them. The Goſpell is hid to none, but ſuch as periſh. This is that condemnation Joh. 3.19. They are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon them in right, but there it ſhall ceaſe, and take full poſſeſſion. They have deſpiſed the remedy, and caſt the potion of their recovery againſt the walles. They ſhall not reſiſt the quaſhing force of this rocke falling upon them, and grinding them to powder. This ſinne oppoſes God in all that, in which he ſought honour to himſelfe: and therefore how terrible will hee bee in revenging himſelfe? How fearfull will it bee to ſee men condemned even by him who yet is the Judge of Gods Chancery? God hath no quarrell with men, like to the quarrell of his Covenant, Levit. 26. 25. When they goe contrary to God in this kinde, hee will goe contrary to them, and avenge them: when hee avoucheth them to bee his redeemed ones in the blood of the Covenant, and himſelfe to bee their God all-ſufficient, and that freely, being enemies and traytors; and they ſhall diſavow him, and tell him to his face, that he is a lyar, meaning nothing leſſe, and his Miniſters to beare falſe witneſſe of him: when he bids them lay down their weapons and come in, and hee will pardon their rebellions: yet they wilfully perſiſt in bearing Armes againſt him, what poſſible way can there be of reconciliation? When tender mercies are rejected, what is to be looked for, but jealouſie burning to hell? Shall a ſecond blood of God bee ſhed for ſuch as have deſpiſed the former? If they who deſpiſe *Moſes* Law, are put to death under two or three witneſſes, how ſhall they eſcape who deſpiſe ſo great ſalvation?

Amos 5.18.

Heb. 10. 29.

Luke 20.17.

Deut. 26. 17.

1 John 5 10.

1 Cor. 15. 15.

Heb. 2. 2. 3.

Fifthly, that is to bee highly eſteemed and enſued, which is ſo rare a commodity, and to be found in ſo few hands, a flower that growes in ſo few Gardens. But Faith is ſuch an one, 2 Theſſ. 3. 2. Faith is not of all: nay, the portion of very few. Every one ſeekes to ingroſſe rich wares, that they may raiſe the market at their pleaſures, for their owne gaine. But the Royall Merchant of this Pearle, beyond price, may well goe alone: for there bee few who will goe to the price of his Pearle. Oh! if the paucity of Beleevers, or rarity of Faith, or ſcantneſſe either of ſuch as preach it, or hearken after it, might perſwade, this reaſon might ſtrongly (as a Load-ſtone) draw us to beleeve. Such as remaine not prophane, yet reſt themſelves in a forme of godlineſſe, keep under the line, and ſubſiſt in a dangerous degree to faith-ward, but dare not reſigne up themſelves to the promiſe. When it ſhould come to this point, they make ſure of ſome faire retreat, or other for themſelves: And when this fruit ſhould come to the birth, there is no ſtrength to bring forth, and ſo they faile of the grace of God, and dye in that ſtate. All that is in requeſt with men, is, how they may get to heaven with moſt eaſe, and rid their hands of this trouble of ſelfe-deniall, and ſelfe-reſigning to God: They will not put themſelves out

5. Motive. Faith is a rare Jewell.

2 Theſſ. 3. 2.

Eſay 37. 3.

2 Kings

of their owne power, nor clearly discharge themselves of all weights which hang on and presse downe in this kinde, and therefore justly may that be mens ruine, which they preferre before mercy, that is, vanity, pleasure, sloth, and ease. Let us then be of those few that beleeve, and not of the world of unbeleevers.

6. Motive. No riddance of our distempers till we beleeve.

Lastly, let this prevaile, that untill thou beleevest, and drownest thy distempers in the promise, thou shalt never be rid of them: Thy staggerings, feares and disquietnesse of thoughts, thine hard heart, thine impatience, thy old corruptions; yea, Satan with seven worse spirits, will returne, and enthrall thee more desperately then ever before. Thou canst have no security from them otherwise, but a truce onely, which will end in worse warre. All thy hearings, prayers, hopes, duties will be forfeit and perish. And were not this lamentable? Especially for such as have been so faire for faith, (wet for it (as 2 Joh. 8.) to lose their reward, for adding a little more soundnesse of heart, to their former knowledge and affections? Is it not a sad sight to see one to make shipwrack in the haven? Who would not pitty himselfe for such folly? Who would lay egges in the sand to bee troden by beasts, except a foole bereft of understanding? Satan will not give thee over, but sift thee throughly: If there be no faith in thee, there is no difference betweene thee and others. Consider (good friends) what the Scripture speakes, If yee will not beleeve, you shall not be established, Esay 7.9. Nothing but this Anchor will settle the ship; nothing but Faith will overcome the world, either within us, or without us. The heart being unpurified, will bewray it selfe: onely to faith is granted to weare the crowne of victory, for this is that victory, even our faith. Oh! who would be alway unsetled, and lye open to all mischiefe, who might prevent it? But I conclude this Use, with the former Directions and Motives. Pray to God (for the Spirit of grace and supplication goe together) that his spirit may perswade thy soule to both these, to deny thy selfe, and to resigne up thy selfe to the promise? Say thus, Lord, thy workes are all perfect, where thou beginst thou finishest. It is beyond flesh to retaine this grace: I have run, I have laboured; but except thou give me the hand to helpe me over this steep hill, I shall fall back again to my old distempers, & the end will be worse then the beginning. Oh therefore let me goe up the hill of faith, as *Jonathan* did up the hill against the Philistines; give mee a signe as thou gavest him, and then all lets and oppositions shall fall before me: all high things which set up themselves; yea, the worst, that is, the contrariety of heart to this thy way of beleeving, shall be cast downe: and then shall I submit nakedly to this obedience of faith. The Lord grant it to us all for his Names sake. This for the first and maine Use of Exhortation be spoken.

Matth. 13.

Job. 39. 14.

1 Joh. 5. 5.

Zach. 12. 10. Conclusion of the exhortation.

1 Sam. 14. 13.

2. Branch.

A second Branch of Exhortation is, to all such as through mercie, have cast themselves upon the promise already for pardon and life, and that is, that they still practise the same grace in the course of their life, in all their straits, crosses, duties, dangers and difficulties, in all their temptations, losses, wrongs and pursuits at the hands of the unthankfull or unreasonable. And in a word, whether for things concerning this

or

or a better life, that they caſt themſelves upon the promiſes for ſalvation, ſuſtaining and full redeeming them from them all. Know this (brethren) that as much adoe as faith coſts us for pardon, yet wee have not done there. It is as great a grace to preſerve the ſoule, as it was to beget it at firſt: enemies will not give us over as ſoone as wee are converted to God, but rather aſſault us more forcibly, as Chriſt himſelfe was by Satan, after his baptiſme and unction to be Mediator. Now then, what helpe have we againſt all affronts, ſave to caſt our ſoules upon him for reliefe and redreſſe, whom wee have already adventured upon for pardon and life? What is our Charter ſave that of our Saviour, Be of good courage, I have overcome the world: Let not your hearts be troubled, you beleeve in the Father, beleeve alſo in me? Caſt your ſelves upon Jehova, for he is eternall ſtrength. Here on the one ſide ſteps in feare, and faith, I ſhall never overcome ſuch a corruption, and luſt, of earthlineſſe, or pride, or ſelfe-love, or revenge, or uncharitableneſſe: or, I ſhall not grow in grace as others doe, but alway ſtand at a ſtay: or, I feele no thriving by the meanes, ſtill after faſting, Sacraments, the old deadneſſe of heart abides, and I walke (as the horſe in the mill) in one dead frame of heart and life. Well, deny thy ſelfe firſt, and then reſigne up thy ſelfe unto the promiſe. Doeſt thou willingly yeeld thy ſelfe to any baſe corruption? Or doeſt thou wilfully ſlight the meanes, or defile thy conſcience? Then looke to thy ſelfe, and lin not, till thy pardon and peace be renewed. But otherwiſe look not at thy diſtruſt or unworthineſſe, but humble thy ſoule for thine unbeliefe, and recover by the promiſe: Say thus, Lord, when I was weake, and without ſtrength, I caſt my ſelfe upon thy word for pardon of ſin, and releaſe of curſe: how much more may I doe it for ſupply of wants? Plead the promiſe now as thou wert wont to cleave to it at firſt.

Plead the promiſe for ſanctification as well as pardon Matth. 4. 1.

Joh. 16. 33. & 14. 1. Eſay 26. 3.

When *Bathſheba* was afraid her ſonne *Salomon* ſhould bee defeated of the Kingdome, ſhe and *Nathan* plotted together to concurre with one Argument, and came to *David*, ſaying: Did not my Lord the King ſay, that *Salomon* ſhould reigne? How then is it, that *Adonija* ſits on the throne? What did David? He rouzes up his dying body, and ſweares, As the Lord lives, looke what I have ſaid, ſhall be accordingly done. Thus by pleading they ſped: Plead thou the promiſe which once God gave thee, and ſo ſhalt thou alſo: Lord, Didſt not thou ſay, Sinne ſhall not reigne? Thine ſhall grow? Thou wilt finiſh thy worke, and they ſhall hold out to the end? And now, lo the Divel perſwades me it ſhall be otherwiſe? But, O Lord, had I firſt clave to ſenſe and feeling, I had never beleeved: Therefore now teach mee to caſt my ſelfe upon thy Word ſtill, and looke off from appearances. Although I feele no great growth, yet becauſe thou haſt ſaid I ſhall, and I doe not wilfully oppoſe it, therefore I beleeve I doe. In like manner ſteps in the malice of Satans inſtruments, and they threaten my ruine, and make me thinke I ſhall one day periſh by them. But I aske my ſoule, Doeſt thou not ſide and ſort with them by an ill conſcience, forſaking thine integrity? Then caſt thy ſelfe upon the promiſe, Pſal. 73. end. Call thy ſelfe a foole, a beaſt, for diſtruſting God: Roll thy wayes

1 King. 1. 15. 28. 26.

2Kings upon him, and say, Was not I alwayes with thee? Didst thou not promise to guide me by counsell, till glory? whom have I in heaven or earth like thee? When *Iehoshaphat* in 2 Chron.20.5. was beset with three armies, what did he? Cleave to sense, and so despaire? No, he pleads a promise, an old one, made to *Salomon* at the dedication of the Temple, Didst thou not say, when enemies should besiege us, and we looke up to thy throne, thou wouldst looke downe? Lo, here is an object for thee, Mount Seir, and Moab, and others. What did God? Instantly answered, and scattered them all. Alas (brethren) our faith forgets her plea, and is weary of her worke. God sets enemies about our eares to file off the rust of faith that shee may still honour him against feares, and carnall reason: We say we have cast anchor upon Gods bottome for pardon, but how shall it appeare? If we say so, who shall gainsay us in a secret thing? But shew it then in our course that secret grace may discover it selfe in straits and trialls, that we may know all that is in our owne hearts, either how weake they are that we may strengthen them, or how strong, that we may be thankfull.

But when sorrowes and feares beset thee on every side, sickneſſe, debt, losses of husband, wife, good ministery, when bad times, examples of debauchednesse, malitious foes, treacherous friends; when all these or any would make us thinke our faith was but a fancy, and we cast our selves upon a promise in vaine: Then looke about thee, here, and never till now is the triall whether thou hast cast thy selfe upon God or no; upon his wisdome to teach thee a way of escape, upon his power, his truth, love and constancy, that he can and will free thee: Is this faith to pretend casting thy selfe upon God, once for all, and when trialls come, to warpe, and to say with *Martha*, Now hee stincketh? To fling up and downe and say, How shall I beare this losse? Endure such affront? Get out of this poverty? Avoid this enemy? Cease all other tricks, and learne one better then all: As the Cat once being challenged by the Fox in point of wit, when the Dogs came upon them, the Fox with all his wit, was torne in peeces, the Cat had but one way but it was worth all, she got up an high tree and secured herselfe. Read Ezra 8.22. He would not dishonour God, but fell to the worke of fasting and beleeving, and so prevailed. Give not thy right in one promise for a world: Its a fountaine better then all dry pits: A wise man will not sell his possibility of a great inheritance for a trifle: assure thy self, there is a promise in the word belonging to every duty, and every part of a Christians course, which who so can beleeve, shall go through it, whether doing or suffering, with sweet ease, in respect of him who goeth to work of his owne head. He that casts himselfe upon the word, cuts off many troubles which others meet with; because his heart being well appaid in Gods love, is not easily unsettled; and as for such as must pinch, yet there hee is upheld, knowing they come from God in love, are no greater then mercy sees meet, are such as Christ himselfe is a party in, and affords to his members, his owne courage, meeknesse, power, and victory to sustaine them in, and in his due time will give a redemption from to all who wait

Joh.11.27.39.

wait for it in well doing, and faint not. Plead therefore the promiſe, and truſt God in all.

The third Branch of Exhortation concernes thoſe who have caſt themſelves upon the promiſe, both for pardon, & alſo for all other ſupport here: To ſuch I ſay, give not God over here neither, but ſtill preſſe him for aſſurance, & fulneſſe of perſwaſion touching both. The faithfull improvement of the promiſe in reſpect of the truth of the promiſer, is often requited by the Lord with ſuch a gratious ſtrength and full ſaile of the Spirit of the promiſe, as makes God and the ſoule to grow into cloſe communion, and holy familiarity, and carries the ſoule above her doubts, feares and complaints; becauſe the Spirit of God witneſſeth unto our ſpirits, both that we are his, and hee ours: Nothing ſhall ſeparate us from his love, nor it from us: All things pertaining to life and godlineſſe, ſhall be miniſtred. This is that which *Paul* ſpeakes of, Epheſ. 1. 13. By which Spirit after you had beleeved, you were ſealed; and by it the Lord makes the ſoule ſo intereſſed in him, that as he knowes who are his, 1 Tim. 3. 1. So they who are his, know themſelves ſo, reflecting this aſſurance to their owne conſciences, ſo that they walke as enlarged ones, becauſe perfect love expells feare. I will not ſay, that their joy doth alway equall their peace: But their peace equalls their aſſurance. Hence it is, that commonly ſuch finde hard duties eaſie, croſſes welcome, feares vaniſht, God preſent in ordinary, ſo that their falls are few, and their peace is conſtant according to that knowledge which they have. Which I adde, becauſe I doubt not but many an upright Chriſtian may in ſome caſes exceed him in ſome acts of cloſeneſſe and obedience, both in doing and ſuffering, who yet goes beyond him in aſſurance; the reaſon is plaine, becauſe aſſurance followeth not alway upon the greatneſſe of light, but the conſtant living by faith in that light which a man hath; ſo that for lacke of light greater faith may come ſhort of that meaſure of obedience which leſſer faith may have. To returne, let none be wanting to himſelfe in ſeeking the greateſt degree, but beware of reſting upon this, that his faith is unfeigned, and the faith of the Elect, and ſo never ſeeke further. This is the generall diſeaſe of moſt Chriſtians at this day, wherein I am perſwaded few attaine that degree which formerly in times of ſmaller light (but more tenderneſſe, conſcience, watchfulneſſe and ſincerity, with diligence) they attained unto: Oh, thou ſhalt one day finde the fruit hereof, when that broad doore of entrance into the Kingdome ſhall not be granted thee! If any aske by what markes the Spirit of ſealing is diſcerned: I anſwer: Firſt, by more then ordinary ſelfe-deniall, humility, ſpiritualneſſe: The nearer the ſoule comes to God, the more it abhorres it ſelfe. Secondly, ſuch an one hath much inured herſelfe to weigh the promiſe; as that ſcholler ſooneſt growes to bee above his rules, who hath got moſt exactneſſe in his rules. Thirdly, he is ordinarily free from doubts. Rom. 8. ult. I am perſwaded that neither life, nor death, &c. Fourthly, death is welcome to him, as it was to *Simeon*, Lord let thy ſervant depart in peace, becauſe mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation. Fifthly, ſuch an one is above carnall reſpects

3. Branch. Perſevering in beleeving procures aſſurance.

Leſſer light in Faith may goe with greater aſſurance.

Note this.

Markes of aſſurance. Luke 5. 8.

or

2 Kings

or owne ends, for he knowes his requitall is not daunted with trouble, hard duties, losses for Gods cause, for hee understands his hundred fold. And so I might adde more, which the examples of *David* and *Paul* in Scripture will affoord. One more I adde, If God visit them with any spirituall desertion (as he may in extraordinary) yet the experience of former mercy, at the lowest point, keepes them so, that the grace of God shall ever be sufficient, and therefore they shall bee content for the time of their eclipse, to be under infirmity, seeing hereby God is most glorified, and their grace approved. Thus it was with our head Christ himselfe, and with *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. 9. So much for this third and last Branch, and so for the whole use of exhortation.

Luke 22. 42.

Vse 6. Comfort. Weake beleevers must not quaile and give over.

Lastly, this is use of Comfort and Encouragement to all Gods weake, though sound and faithfull ones, who (though in much poverty and infirmity of spirit) have desired to cast themselves upon the promise, when yet their light is divine, and their setling and comfort but small. Say thine owne heart oft misgives thee, saying, I have long heard, and received the Sacraments, with other helps, but I cannot put on the Lord Jesus, I cannot in particular fasten upon each part of his Mediation and Merit, as King, Priest and Prophet: I am afraid to die: I doubt, if hard times should come, I should bee the first should stagger, and deny Christ: I am troubled oft about my evidences: when I have any, I keep them not long, mine example is darke, my peace small, my selfe very silly to conceive, remember, affect goodnesse, all goe before me; and a thousand such. Well: But yet this thou hast, that when all is done, yet thou art not willing to give over the Lord: there is a secret thing which upholds thee, thou knowest not as yet what God is doing for thee; but thou shalt know: Thou sayest, *Whither should I go Lord, if I forsake thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life.* This againe thou hast, when thou canst not swim, yet thou liest upon the bladders of the promise, waiting for more skill. If thou sink as thou art comming, yet thou hast an hand to put out, and a tongue to say, Lord Jesus catch me. Thou canst not answer every doubt by a word, but thou plungest thy selfe upon it, to answer for thee, and canst send Divell, World, and Unbelief, to Christ in thy stead. Be comforted, all is well. When *Peter*, Acts 12. was bidden to put on his Cloke and Sandals, and follow the Angell, though he saw not why, or wherefore, being asleep, yet this he did, he obeyed, and did as hee was bidden; and when hee was past all Barres and Gates, hee saw the truth of all. So dost thou obey, although yet thou seest not why. But in time thou shalt. And therefore doe not mutter, seasons of more light, strength and comfort, are in the Lords dispose, not thine. If thou be neither lazie nor rebellious, it is God, and not thou, who holds thee at this stay. Be as God will have thee: Behold the salvation of God, it shall bee thy strength to sit still. Perhaps there is more within then appeares as yet. Rather wonder that thou hast any thing, that thou livest, or mayst look up to heaven, then thy strength is no greater. And this know, the Lord tries thee with little, to see if that will make thee thankful, that he may give thee more. Still clasp upon the Promise; remember *Salomons* speech, The Cony is a weake Nation; but they make their holes in the

Joh. 19. 7.

Joh. 6. 68.

Matth. 14. 30.

Prov. 30. 26.

the rocke, and ſo become ſtrong, becauſe wiſe in weakeneſſe. The Ivy is a weake plant, but it hath teeth and ſtrings to faſten hard upon a bricke wall, and ſo growes above the Oake. A weake child hath all the parts of a ſtrong man, although not the ſtrength of any. In a word, apply that to thy ſelfe which the Lord ſpeakes Eſay 50.10. He that hath no light, but is in darkeneſſe, yet feares God, and obeyes his voice; let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay himſelfe upon his God. Better a little light then thy owne ſparkles. As for the worlds diſdaine it is common to thee and the ſtrongeſt. And ſo much for the whole Doctrine, which as it was my chiefe ſcope in this Treatiſe, ſo I pray God above all (and yet withall) the reſt to bleſſe unto us both.

Having finiſhed *Naamans* obedience it ſelfe, now wee proceed to the rule, or (if you will) to the extent of it: For the Text preciſely addeth, That he did obey according to the word of the man of God. Before we have heard how croſſely he carried himſelfe toward this meſſage, and the Holy Ghoſt hath at large ſhamed him for it: But now the Lord having got the victory over his ſtout and rebellious ſpirit, lo, how he alſo rejoyceth to deſcribe it, and to preſent unto us what a ſtrange change is wrought in him. For why? Now he ſubmits himſelfe to the rule of the word, at which he had ſo cavilled, and to the uttermoſt thereof, he went downe and obeyed, according to all the circumſtances of the word of the Prophet. Two things there were in the Prophets ſaying: Firſt, a ſolemne charge in and under the authority of God, this charge he yeeldeth unto: For he goeth downe to Jorden, waſheth himſelfe, and that ſeven times, omitting nothing at all of the charge, neither for matter, nor manner. Secondly, there was a promiſe, and that was a perſwaſion to obey from the aſſured effect that would come thereof. This promiſe he conſents unto, acknowledges it, & good reaſon to be in it, and takes it as no humane, but a meere divine cure, and ſo concurres (as I have ſaid) with it, and that to the uttermoſt intention and meaning of it. From theſe two branches ariſe two points, the firſt whereof we will now propound, open and make uſe of ere we come to the other. The former point then is this, Gods commands are ſad things, not to be ſhuffled, or diſpenced with, but to be obeyed, according to the true tenor, intent and contents thereof. Perhaps ſome may thinke, that I am more curious then I need to be in faſtning a point of ſuch weight upon words (in ſhew) not bearing it well up: For why? They will take this phraſe of the Holy Ghoſt to be but a complement of ſpeech, meaning and containing no more then a bare narration of a thing as it was done, without further ſcope, and beſides, the charge having in it no morality (being onely an occaſionall charge for the time preſent, concerning *Naaman* onely, and reaching to none elſe;) they may alledge that it inſtructs not us of any morall obedience which is of a perpetuall nature: To whom I would make the fuller anſwer, becauſe I ſhall treat ſomewhat fully of the Doctrine: and firſt I will grant that perhaps in the Scripture many Texts may be found, in which the ſadneſſe and cloſeneſſe of obeying commands might be more ſtrongly grounded; but that

The ſecond generall of the verſe, v.2. The extent of Naamans obedience.

In two things.

1. Extent of the command.

2. Extent of the promiſe.

The grounding of the former of theſe.

Queſt.

Anſw.

1.

2Kings

that is not the queſtion now; onely this it is whether the expreſſe relation of the Holy Ghoſt touching the punctualneſſe of his obedience be not ground ſufficient of the Doctrine; eſpecially the Text ſeeming to mention it with delight, and to record how farre the Lord brought downe *Naamans* heart from the extremity of ſlighting all, to ſuch an extent of obeying to the uttermoſt.

2. Anſwer. Occaſionall commands binde as much as morall and perpetuall, for the preſent.

Secondly, I would have it well noted, That meerly occaſionall and temporary commands (when the Lord thinkes good to give them in charge) binde as ſadly and fully, for the preſent, and for them whom they concern, as any morall and perpetuall ones doe: I adde, that they are as dangerous and ſad in the tranſgreſſion to ſuch, as they are made unto, whether the parties be faithfull or unfaithfull. For example: It was but a meere poſitive, and (as farre as I can learne) a temporary charge, Exod. 12. 22. to ſprinkle the Doore-poſts of the Iſraelites houſes with the blood of the Lamb which was to be the Paſſeover (I confeſſe the Sacrament was for continuance, but the ſprinkling was but for the preſent) Howbeit, had the charge beene broken, how ſad the effect had been, all know. *Moſes* his ſtriking the Rocke, was the obedience onely to an occaſionall command, in reſpect of the act done at that time; but the neglect of the due manner of doing of it (though through infirmity onely) coſt him the loſſe of that type of entring into Gods Reſt, that is the promiſed Land. And leſt any (perhaps) might except againſt this inſtance, take others of meere occaſionall nature: That of the young Prophet charg'd to goe and denounce againſt Bethel, and not to eate or drinke in the place, was a thing in it ſelfe neither good nor bad: yet God having poſitively ſet it downe for a rule to curb him, we ſee the tranſgreſſion of it coſt him his life, whatſoever colour hee might pretend from the old Prophets reaſons or perſon to induce him to it. So might I ſay of all other. It was but an occaſionall thing that the Lord charged *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 13. to ſtay for *Samuel*, and not to adventure to pray, and offer ſacrifice himſelfe, before the battell. It was but occaſionall that he was charged to deſtroy all *Amalek*, branch and ruſh, man and beaſt: yet, what his diſpenſing and paltring with God in both coſt him, wee all know. Briefly, I ſay of all ſuch incident and occaſioned commands, whether for the temporarineſſe of them, or for the indifferency of the things urged: they are as ſad things for the neceſſity, and penalties, for doing or for not doing, as the morall. Ceremonies in their nature had nothing in them to force obedience; howbeit, hee that tranſgreſſed one of them, as in gathering of ſticks upon the Sabbath, offering a beaſt with any blemiſh in it, ſtaying up the Ark contrary to the charge, or the like, wee ſee had fearfull puniſhments annexed, as to be ſtoned, to be ſtricken dead, to be cut off from his people. And why? Becauſe (during Gods pleaſure) they were in as great force, and bound the conſcience as much as the morall, whereof they were but as ſhels, and whereto they onely ſerved as fences and fortifications. So that ſtill the Doctrine holds farme, That Gods commands are ſad things, not to be diſpenſed with at our pleaſure, or by our diſtinctions: But indiſpenſable, unappealable, unavoidable: and therefore to be obeyed according to the intent, and the extent,

Numb. 20. 8.

2 Kings 13. 3. 4.

1 Sam. 15. 2. 3.

Numb. 15. 32.

2 Sam. 6. 7.

Doctrine. Gods Commands are ſad things.

extent, length and breadth thereof. For the proſecution of which point, firſt, I will prove it by Scripture, ſecondly, I will reaſon it, thirdly, ſhew both what the intent of a command is, and what the extent is, and ſo come to Uſe. For Prooſes, wee may remember what phraſes the Lord uſes to make good this truth: He tells us he will not have us to doe that which ſeemes good in our owne eyes, but obey his voice. He bids the people to obey the Prophet which he ſhould give them, (the Lord Jeſus the word of the eternall Father) and heare his voice, for (he ſaith) he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions, if you run after your owne devices. Againe, he tells us, That the obeying of his commands is life or death, I ſet before thee this day life or death; a ſad point. And the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes tells us, That the breaker of *Moſes* Law under two or three witneſſes eſcaped not. How oft have we this phraſe continued in Deutronomy, they did according to the word of the Lord by the hand of *Moſes*; in every thing done ſtill, the rule and the extent of obeying are added, According to the command of the Lord they pitched and removed; they attended the pillar of fire by night, and of cloud by day: And againe, Do all according to the patterne ſhewed thee in the Mount. Adde not to this Law, nor detract from it, but doe all that is written, turning neither to the right hand nor left; to this purpoſe is that phraſe, Walke narrowly; a word taken from them that work by line & rule, as if the workman cut or ſaw his timber or boards beſides his chalke, or marke, we know hee ſpoiles his work, but if he hew or ſaw it even & narrowly, carrying a ſteddy eye from going out or in, he makes good worke of it: So the word of commands muſt be cloſely clave unto, without warping or ſwerving. Thence it is that we are ſo oft called to a due beholding of the perſon commanding us: He (ſaith the Apoſtle) whom we have to deale withall, beholds all things as open and naked; noting that in commands we have not to deale with a man like our ſelves, whoſe edicts we can pick holes in, and picke quarrells againſt, but a ſad and ſolemne Majeſty, who will not be dallied withall; For our God is a conſuming fire: and ſo alſo we are oft pinched with the authority and power of the word, The word of God is piercing, and ſharpe as a two edged ſword, dividing betweene the joints and the marrow, and diſcerning the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Proofes of it.

Deut 12.8.

Deut. 18.18.
Deut. 30.15.
Deut. 11.26.
Heb. 2.3.
Deut. ubiq;
Num. 9.
Eph. 5.15.16.
Heb. 4.13.
Heb. 12. ult.
Heb. 4.12.

Men of place dare avow any thing which they command to their inferiours, by the place which they are in: Smite him (ſaith *Abſalon* to his ſervanrs concerning *Ammon*) for lo, have not I commanded you; how much more ſhall the Lord beare himſelfe upon his royall Authority, and ſoveraigne Power in the things which he commands? As we read often in Scripture that hee urgeth men to obey by this argument, Have not I commanded thee? So we ſee againe that *Moſes* having uttered the ſong to the children of Iſrael, concludes thus, Set your hearts unto all the words which I teſtifie among you this day, which you ſhall command your children to obſerve: and why? Marke, For this is not a vaine thing unto you, becauſe it is you life, and hereby you ſhall prolong your dayes in the land which you goe to poſſeſſe: When he tells them, it is not a vaine thing, hee meanes the greater by the

2 Sam. 13. 28.

Deut. 32.46.

2 Kings

the leſſe, that is, It is a ſad and weighty thing, as much as your ſoules and ſalvation come to; make not therefore vaine matters of my commands, nor ſtrange things of the great things of my Law. When *Samuel* encounters *Saul* in thoſe two eminent Chapters, the 13. and 15. verſ. 13. and 14. touching his fulfilling the charges which God had enjoyned him; marke, how he oppoſes ſtill the commands of God to *Sauls* ſlightneſſe, ſweeping downe his cobwebs with the beſome of Gods commands: Hath the Lord more pleaſure in oxen then in hearing his voice? Thou haſt done fooliſhly, thou haſt not obeyed the commands which the Lord thy God commanded thee. So much for Proofes.

Reaſon 1. Their firſt making was ſolemne.

For Reaſons of this point, they are many. Firſt, the manner wherein the commands were given by God, argued of what nature they were: all that terror and awfulneſſe which he caſt upon the camp, arraigning ſix hundred thouſand men, beſides women & children, at his tribunall, and not admitting them to come within the liſts ſet at the foote of the mount, beſides thoſe fearefull earthquakes, thunders, lightnings, darkeneſſe and ſmoke which ſcared the beholders, and made *Moſes* himſelfe to quake, and rottenneſſe to enter into the bones of men, ſhewed ſufficiently that Gods commands were no noſe of wax to be turned which way we liſt, nor trifles to be dallied with, but ſtedfaſt, weighty and ſolemne things, to be obſerved with ſad and ſerious care of heart, with great cloſeneſſe and narrowneſſe: And ſurely if the Lord Jeſus in his commands, was ſo full of authority when hee was at ſuch diſtance, and ſo farre off; how much more authority is he of in thoſe commands of his publiſhed in the Goſpell, I meane the command of Faith, and thoſe morall commands of the Law which himſelfe hath diſtinctly eſtabliſhed, and interpreted, (as we ſee it was his ſcope in thoſe Sermons upon the Mount) preſſing that he came not to breake, but to ſtrengthen them? If a Princes Lawes made only by lawfully deputed Officers were ſo great, what are they which in perſon, and with his owne mouth he hath uttered? And how great is the diſobedience of them that reſiſt? So much for the firſt.

Matth. 5. 17.

Heb. 2. 3. 4.

Reaſon 2. They borrow their ſadneſſe from the nature of the Commander.

Secondly, the commands of God borrow their weight from his owne nature whence they proceed. The will of God is the Idea of them, and they doe but argue and witneſſe what that is. Now we know the will of God is moſt ſoveraigne, powerfull, indiſpencible, whether we ſpeake of it as his nature and being, or as the effect thereof, in that tranſcendent and ſecret way and purpoſe thereof, whereby he hath determined of the ends & ſtates of all men: Now then are not thoſe expreſſions of his will in his commands, anſwerable thereto? And are they not as cloſely to be obſerved, as the other to be deeply adored? Yes ſurely, Men will bow to the chaire of Eſtate when the King is out of it for neare reſemblance: How much more ſhall we fall under the authority of commands, wherein the Lord is ſo preſent, as that he can never be ſeparated? And whereunto he hath annexed ſuch ſad penalties as no mortall creature can either avoid, or undergoe? So much for the ſecond.

Reaſon 3.

Thirdly, this appeares by due proportion. It is for the honour and Majeſty,

Majeſty of God, to tye the conſcience and inner man of his creature, with as ſtrong ties, and to as narrow obedience, as any mortall Prince can tye the outward man to cloſeneſſe and punctualneſſe of duty. But we ſee Princes count it their chiefe honour to plant themſelves in their ſubjects hearts, in the uttermoſt and deepeſt awe of ſoveraigntie. Although they be never ſo diſtant from their ſubjects, yet they look that the influence of their Royall pleaſure ſhall goe through their whole Kingdome: That none ſhould be ſo daring and preſumptuous, as once to mute or quetch, if they once proclaime their will. That muſt ſtand for a Law: if any man enquire or diſpute their prerogative, they eſteeme them Traytors, ſo ſacred and inviolable they looke, that their Perſons and Edicts ſhould be, that they will have them indiſputable and unimpeached. See it in *Saul*: when it pleaſed him to enact a Law for the time of battell, that no man ſhould touch a bit, or taſte a drop of meat or drinke, till the Philiſtines were overthrowne; how did that Proclamation of his force the wils of his ſubjects to obey when as yet they were ſtrongly provoked to break it? Could an Edict of ſuch rigor (ſcarce juſt) ſo prevaile, and that in ſecret, and ſhall not the Lords moſt righteous will much more? Is it for the Kings honour to preſſe the ſubject, not onely for civill homage, but for conſcience ſake to obey him; and is it not much more for the glory of our King inviſible and immortall? Yes ſure, it makes much for his renowne, that all his people doe, without all queſtioning and difficulty, freely and nakedly cloſe with his commands, for that ſoveraignty and authority ſake, which himſelfe hath conveyed into them: Elſe we ſhould make the Lord a weake King.

Fourthly, wee muſt know, that the Lord hath marvellous rewards for obeyers of his commands, and therefore well may hee require at our hands, excellent obedience: his pay is not common, ordinary, ſlight and generall, but cloſe and bountifull. In obeying his Commands, there is great reward. *Saul* lookt that his ſervants ſhould bee very cloſe and faithfull to him (in a ſinfull caſe) becauſe of his rewards. Can the ſonne of *Iſhai* give you Olives and Vineyards? If a Maſter allow a ſpeciall ſervant double wages, he looks that his ſervice ſhould bee very cloſe, and his eye in every corner for his Maſters advantage. So here: None give ſuch wages as he, therefore no worke ſhould be done like his, no commands ought to be ſo punctuall as his. If a Maſter ſhould make his ſervant his childe, and give him his lands, he gives him no more then he may loſe; nay, then he muſt forgoe. Princes allow ſome ſubjects rewards reaching to the halfe of their Kingdome. But the Lord makes every ſervant of his, a free borne childe, and gives him a never fading inheritance of glory; yea, a whole, an eternall kingdome for the leaſt obedience they performe, even for a Cup of cold water; yea, for every command they obey. And ſhall not they then bee punctuall, cloſe and ſerious in their obeying?

Fifthly, whatſoever is in God, is eminently ſo: not onely in reſpect of influence and cauſing, but of perfection and integrity. Now Gods will is himſelfe, and his Commands (as I have ſaid) are the ingraven forme thereof. Therefore they muſt bee eminently ſuch as they are.

2 King 8

The proportion of the lawes of earthly Princes, doth prove it.

1 Sam. 14. 24.

Reaſon 4. God hath great rewards for obeyers. Pſal. 19. 10. 11. 1 Sam. 22. 7.

Matth. 10. 42.

Reaſon 5. Whatſoever is in God, is eminent. Pſal. 19.

2 Kings

Are they righteous, cloſe, ſound, pure? Then muſt they alſo bee eminently ſo, exceeding pure, righteous, ſoveraigne and ſolemne. Nothing in God is common or vulgar: therefore nothing of God, or comming from ſuch eminency, can be otherwiſe. And, if the commands of God (which are as the Seale) are ſuch, then ought the ſtamp in the conſcience, ſpirit and practice of men, be ſuch, which ought to be as the wax to the ſeale.

Pſal. 19.

Reaſon 6. Elſe God his ſubjects might rule him, not he them.

Sixthly, if the Lord had not Law and Soveraignty ſufficient in his owne hands to rule his ſubjects and creatures, then might they give him law, not he them. What a poore and titular King were hee, who muſt ſtand to the good will of his people, as being more ſtrong and ſubſiſting in themſelves, then himſelfe? What a King would he be, who either for lacke of power, or becauſe hee hath reſigned up his power, cannot match them who are under his command? How poore was it with *David*, when his owne ſonne and his ſubjects; yea, *Ioab* and *Abiſhai* were too ſtrong for him? A true King muſt bee furniſht with power, policie, and influence of authority ſufficient, to curb, overmatch, and ſubdue his ſubjects: how much more then the Lord? Doubtleſſe, were not his lawes full of majeſty and authority, they could not match and equall the corruption of their hearts, whom they ought to governe. For example: The heart of man is very ſtout, lofty and rebellious: If then the Word and Law of God were not full of ſtrength, able to make it quake and tremble; yea, to caſt downe and breake the rockes and hills, and to make Carmell and Lebanon to ſhake, how ſhould he controll it? Even *Belſhazzars* knees ſmote together at his hand-writing. The heart of man is baſe and ſlaviſh; Slaves watch their ſeaſon and opportunity, when their Maſters eyes is off, & his backe turned, to play their parts. If then this law of his were not (like the ſoule in the body) wholly in all, and wholly in every part, beholding the creature alway, in each corner, and at every turne, how would hypocrites make bold with him? But now his whip is before them, and his ſword hangs over them perpetually: His Sergeant and Keeper is never from their heeles: their owne conſcience and his Spirit (as *Eliſha's* with *Gehazi*) going out with them, & comming in; whither ſhall they goe from his preſence, but hee will over-take them? If they goe up to Heaven, or downe to Hell, or to the utmoſt parts of the Earth, his eye followes them, and they are ſtill naked before him. Therefore there is no playing their rex more in one place, or one time, then another. So againe, The heart of man is deep and deceitfull, who can know it? If then the Lord were not more ſearching, narrow and politick, then all the cunning of hypocrites, and if his commands were not able to hunt them out of all their nookes and corners (as *Samuel* did *Saul*, and as *Abija* did *Ieroboams* wife) how ſhould he keep his ſtate and dignity over it? Muſt he not needs be over-reached by it? But now the candle of the Lord ſearcheth all the bowels of the belly: all thoſe ſecret windings and turnings of a cloſe and falſe heart, are open to him, and to his word, commands and terrors (even as *Benhadads* plots to *Eliſha*.) And ſo may I ſay of all the reſt. The word of God is fully able to match and controll whatſoever is in the corrupt heart of man,

2 Sam. 3. 39.

Nahum. 1. 3.

Dan. 5. 6.

Pſal. 139. 8.

Jer. 17. 9.

1 Sam. 15.
1 King. 14.

Prov. 20. 27.

2 King. 6. 12.

man, and in that reſpect is a law meet and fit to rule and controll it. And therefore how meeke, calme, how open, plaine, how loyall, faithfull ſhould that obedience be, which the ſoule ſhould performe unto his commands! So much for this.

Reaſon 7. God hath power to repeale the ſaddeſt law, therefore to make it. Deut. 22. 6.

Seventhly, the Lord hath power to repeal Lawes, as well as to make them: his will maketh that to be Law at one time, which at another is none: he can reconcile contraries by his will: he that at one time forbids to kill the Damme upon the Egges, at another time commands to kill the women and their ſucklings at their breaſts, or in travell, or big with childe, and yet both lawfull: He that forbids the ſpoiling of ſo much as the ſcraps that fall from our Tables, or are left after meales, at another, commands the remainder of the Paſſeover next morning, to be burnt with fire: He that forbids to ſteale a pin or a point from another, commands to rob men of their beſt jewels, gold and ſilver. So that from his mouth we muſt receive Law: his will is Law, either forbidding or enjoyning. Therefore it muſt needs be, that it is ſoveraigne and not to be controlled by any, or all the creatures. The Lord commands policie to be uſed by a Captaine in warre; yet if hee will have men play the fooles, and fight with Lampes and Rammes-hornes, it is better then policie: yea, he will have *Saul* to wait for *Samuel*, although his Souldiers goe from him, and his enemies are ready to ſurprize him. When the Lord commands, it is a ſinne to ſuffer an Oxe to periſh, or a ſheep to miſcarry in a ditch, or the like: And againe, when he pleaſeth all the fat Oxen and Cattell of a Kingdome muſt bee ſlaine downe-rights, and be made dung for the earth: yea, their owners alſo muſt be deſtroyed. So much for reaſons.

1 Sam. 15. 3.

Exod. 12. 36.

Judg. 20. 29. Joſh. 6. 8.

1 Sam. 13. 13.

Luke 14. 5. 1 Sam. 15. 3.

Queſt. 1.

Now I come to the ſecond generall; viz. to anſwer thoſe two queſtions, What I mean by the Intenſion and Extenſion of Commands. By Intenſion I underſtand the ſimplicity, uprightneſſe, and integrity which Gods commands require of his people. By extenſion I meane the largeneſſe and elbow-roome, the bredth and reach of them. Both theſe make much to ſet forth their authority: For the former, Gods object at which he aimes in commanding, which hee bindes by his charges, and arraignes at his Barre, for breaking them, is the conſcience of a man: hee ſets up his Rules in the ſecreteſt part of man, called in Scripture, the Spirit or inner man, of the moſt retired thoughts and affections. To this Cloſet no law of man can pierce, ſave God: he is the Lord of the bodies, but the ſoules are Gods peculiar: Hee requires indeed outward kiſſing the Sonne, and bowing the knee; but he moreover urges the due of the heart: There he will have his lawes written, even in the heart; and thence he will have obedience to flow. So *Paul*, I delight in the Law of God in my inner man: And, whom I ſerve in my ſpirit. The intents of the heart are pierced by this word and Lawgiver: he judgeth the uprightneſſe, tenderneſſe, narrowneſſe, cloſeneſſe of our obedience by the heart root: If it be planted there, even in the bent and ſtreame thereof: all is well, not elſe. Read Matth. 5. 28. You have heard ſay of old, Thou ſhalt not commit adultery: But I ſay, He that luſteth after a woman, hath committed that ſinne in his heart. So that the Lord lookes at a pure principle, manner and ſcope

Anſwer. Intenſion & Extenſion of Commands what.

Jer. 31. 33. Rom. 14. 11.

Prov. 16. Rom. 7. 22, 25.

Heb. 4. 6.

2 Kings

of the heart, as well as the curbing of the outward man or members. Princes are mounted upon Thrones of Ivory or Gold: But the Lord onely exalts himſelfe in the ſpirit and conſcience; there he ſits as Soveraigne, and cauſes it to become his owne Recorder, witneſſe, and Judge, againſt the perſon himſelfe, ſo that the greateſt ſelfe-love in the world cannot bribe the conſcience to ſide with the ſinner againſt him who is the Lord of conſcience, and can condemne both the one & the other. Feare not him who can kill the body onely, but him who can caſt body and ſoule into hell fire, I ſay unto you, feare him. So then the Soveraignty of the commands of God, ſtands much in the intents of God, and that meaning of his to rule the ſpirits of his ſubjects; and in all their obedience, either negative or affirmative, either in doing or ſuffering, to caſt a ſecret chaine upon the conſcience, to obey cheerfully, equally, uprightly, wiſely, conſtantly: For inſtance, in the worſhip of a Sabbath, the abhorring of oppreſſion, the ſuffering for the cauſe and truth of God; the Lord lookes not at the externall act, but the intent of the ſoule, and the pure carriage of the heart towards himſelfe, as with what delight it keepes a Sabbath, how cordially it preſerves the ſpirit chaſte and cleane, for what ends it ſuffers the croſſe, whether for Gods or it owne. Thus much for the former.

1 John 3.20. Matth. 10. 28.

Queſt. 2. What is meant by the extent of a command.

The latter is, what is meant by the extent of a command? I anſwer, The full reach of the command. As for inſtance. Firſt, the unlimitedneſſe of the command. The Lord makes not ſome Lawes for great ones, and ſome for ſmall ones; as if the great flye might get through the cobweb, but the little ones muſt be taken; but his nets as they are ſmall enough to catch the ſmall fiſh, ſo they are ſtrong enough to hold Whales and the mighteſt. They reach to all ſorts without limit, rich and poore, noble and ſimple, high and low, one and another. Secondly, their extent ſtands in their influence to all: The Princes law reaches to all his Subjects, as well as to his Chamber of London, but yet the law-giver reacheth no further then his preſence, in abſence, and behinde his backe his Lawes are ſlighted. But this Law-giver is omnipreſent, and aſſiſts his Lawes with immediate influence, cauſing them to convince in ſecret, as well as in publicke, and is able to execute his owne Lawes to the uttermoſt, ſo that for lacke of ſtrength, and reach of arme, no ſinner can goe unpuniſhed. Thirdly, this breadth reaches in the affirmative command to the negative, and in the negative to the affirmative, as directly as if they had both been expreſſed: In the narrow Lawes of men, the ſenſe and ſcope of the Law muſt bee limited to the words of the Statute; which (as the common ſpeech is) have no meaning in them beyond the tearmes thereof: But the power of Gods commands ſtands in their inſinuations, and imply ſomewhat by neceſſity which they expreſſe not. Fourthly, their extent ſtands in the coherence thereof, to wit, that whatſoever maine good or evill the Lord commands or forbids, by the ſame power, hee forbids or commands whatſoever concernes that command, the means tending thereto, the occaſions leading, all circumſtances attending whatſoever poſſibly the ſoule of man can apprehend, directly or indirectly to make

for

for that Law, or to thwart or croſſe that Law. Fifthly, it reaches to the quantity and meaſure of the duty, urging not only ſin to be ſhunned in the greateſt degree, but alſo in the ſmalleſt, and ſo, duty to be done, not only in the main peeces, but in the pettieſt, all proceeding from the ſame goodneſſe and juſtice. Sixthly, it reaches to the meaſure of the principle of obeying, urging it to obey, not coldly, deadly, ſlackly, formally, but to put forth the uttermoſt affection, ſtrength, wiſdome, will, courage, zeale, reach and largeneſſe, fruitfulneſſe and extenſion of the inward and outward man to concurre with the meaning of the Commander, which the Holy Ghoſt calls all welpleaſing, Col. 1. 7. Seventhly, it reacheth to an univerſality of time, place, occaſions, not to be limited, ſtraitened and circumſcribed at our narrow will and pleaſure; but tyes us alway, yeſterday, to day and ever to one obedience, not to vary with the time, with the multitude, by occaſion of dangers, feares, loſſes, enmity, power of man; not to be caſt off in private, in ſecret; but to be enlarged according to it ſelfe, generally, to all circumſtances. This is a field of matter, but I have already elſewhere walked in it in ſome ſort, as the reader hereof may perceive by that I have written in my practicall Catechiſme, part. 3. in the article of the directive rule of our obedience, the Law of God, where I treat fully of the point. So much for this ſecond.

Heb. 13. 8.

To theſe two queſtions, a third may be added, and anſwered ere we goe any further: and that is, that it may ſeem harſh to preſſe this point under the Goſpell, ſince that the liberty thereof takes off this ſtrictneſſe, and limits commands from the old extent of them, to the eaſe of the Goſpell. To the which I anſwer, That the Goſpell is ſo farre from that looſeneſſe, that rather it eſtabliſhes, extends and corroborates them then otherwiſe. A great part of our Saviours Sermon upou the Mount is ſpent in confuting this conceit, not onely of Phariſaicall, but of Antinomian abuſe and diſſoluteneſſe. *Paul* alſo tells us, Ro. 2. ult. that faith ſetles the Law ſtronger upon her bottome then ever. So that he is as well accurſed now as ever, who ſhall adde or detract, Rev. 22. True it is, that the terror, rigor and the impoſſibleneſſe of the Law is removed by our Lord Jeſus; but looke what is taken off in that kinde, is ſupplied in another; for the ſpiritualneſſe and purity of obeying is enlarged now, rather then diminiſhed; only it is true, that even in this enlargement the Lord Jeſus hath made his yoke moſt ſweet and eaſie to them who out of faith, love and a good conſcience ſeeke the end of the commandement, as *Paul* ſpeakes; of which more ſhall be occaſioned to ſpeake after, (if God will) in the uſe of Exhortation. Its enough here to ſay, That as the Lord Jeſus hath removed that burdenſomeneſſe, tyranny and irkeſome rigor of Lawes, which was intollerable; ſo he hath put another yoke upon the ſoule inſtead thereof, which although love make ſweet, yet juſtice will not abate, nor cut off: Love made *Iacobs* labour welcome, but ſtill the froſt was tedious, and the heat weariſome, and the conditions hard enough to fleſh and bloud. So much for this, and for the ground of the point.

Obiect.

Anſw.

Matth. 5. 6. 7.

The Law how far its ſtrengthened or weakned by the Goſpell. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 6.

Gen. 29. 20.

Now in the third place, I come to the uſe of the Doctrine. And

Vſe 1.

2Kings

Inſtruction with Caveat. 1. Branch.

first let it be Inſtruction and Caveat to all ſuperiours and men in dignity and authority, as to acknowledge a wide difference between their ſoveraignty of commands in reſpect of Gods, ſo to looke to it (as they will anſwer it to God) that they uſurpe not Gods prerogative over ſuch their inferiours, as by providence are under them. To execute Gods authority over their ſubjects and inferiours is lawfull for them, to bee Officers and Viceroyes, or Vicegerents under and for him, acknowledging that all kingdome and power of theirs is under a greater, and earth is ſtill under heaven, this is meet. But to uſurpe a power unlimited over the conſciences of men, or to equall their ſoveraignty with Gods, is unjuſt. For why? Gods commands admit no inquiry, deliberation, ſhifts or excuſes; but require a free, reſolute, unlimited, unqueſtioned ſubjection. So doe not mans. A Maſter cannot force the conſcience of his ſervant to what he pleaſeth, as if all the blame ſhould lye upon his necke, if the ſervant offend God in pleaſing man: No, for although the Maſter ſhall pay ſweetly for impoſing it, yet, ſo ſhall the ſervant alſo in venturing to obey a command uſurpedly impoſed, and therefore it imports him to enquire of the lawfulneſſe of the charge which his Maſter urgeth, except he will incurre the premunire of God and his penalties for tranſgreſſion: Its therefore both their duties to eſteeme their commands, and obedience thereto according to the rule of the Word, knowing that onely Gods commands are of themſelves, Law; other commands are ſo, ſo farre as they borrow their warrant from thence; and therefore ought to bee inquired into, ſcanned and debated before they be obeyed. I doe not intend to trench upon the poſitive civill power of Kings and Magiſtrates: I ſpeake of that uſurpation of Governours, whereby they take upon them to impoſe Laws upon inferiors, contrary to the commands of God. Let the Soveraignty and extent of the Lawes of God be a curbe and bridle unto all men in place to ſubordinate their lawes to Gods, and not to trench upon them. He that ſhall breake the leaſt of theſe commands, and teach or force others to breake them, undertaking to ſtand betweene them and their harms, to anſwer God for the violation of his will, ſhall be leaſt in Gods Kingdome. I urge this the rather, becauſe I ſee that ſome defend the contrary: By name, that a ſervant is bound to obey his Maſter, urging the breach of the Sabbath, (I meane ſuch a worke as infers neceſſity of breaking it) and ſinnes not therein, the obeying of his Maſter ſhall ſave him harmeleſſe, and the Maſter ſhalll bear all the blame; what a trumpet of defiance is this, to proclame licentiouſneſſe in breaking Gods Sabbath?

Gods commands exceed mens in point of unlimitednesse & Soveraignty.

Matth.5.19.

Inferiours muſt inquire into their Maſters commands, and not obey implicitely.

So may I ſay of the Miniſter of a Congregation: Let him beware leſt he lend that authority and ſtrength which God hath put upon his perſon, to countenance, backe and ſupport any baſe diſhonour of God, any the leaſt affront given to the Commands of God. But remember, as thou wouldſt have thy people in all things ſubject to thee under God; ſo bee thou cloſely ſubject to God, who hath thee at a more infinite bay and vantage, then thou canſt have them. Oh! feare thou him who hath thee and thine at ſuch a becke and command, that hee can deſtroy ſoule and body in hell: Feare him, I ſay, whom there is no appeale

Miniſters muſt not proſtitute their authority, to urge or backe commands againſt God. Matth.10.end.

appeale from, no cavilling againſt, no diſpenſing with, no concealing from, no avoyding of his wrath. If any would abuſe thy place and perſon, to ſet up or bolſter any prophanations, liberties, or corruptions, which they cannot ſo well bolſter as thou mayſt, by the opinion which men have of thy learning, thy yeares and gravity, experience or gifts: Beware, and proſtitute not Gods commands to the baſeneſſe of men, ſet not thy conſcience to ſale to pleaſe men. If thy licentious Patrone, (who claimes an intereſt in thee) would borrow a priviledge from thee and thy Miniſtery, to live in luſt, uſury, oppreſſion, baſe pleaſures: If thy people would pull thee from thy zeale, and cloſeneſſe of conſcience, to juſtifie them in the prophaning of Gods day, and the blowing a trumpet to that which fleſh of it ſelfe is too propenſe unto: Look to thy ſelfe, let not feare of loſing thine eſteeme with them, or their love; no, nor thy credit, thy living, thy peace and liberty of Miniſtery. Let not favour and flattery, to bee praiſed and commended, to bee a moderate man, draw thee on either hand to violate thy peace.

Remember thoſe two fearfull paternes in Scripture, which I ſhall mention: the one voluntary, the other compelled, but neither of them allowed by God. The former is, the example of that old Prophet, who knowing that the young Prophet (ſent by God to denounce againſt the Altar and Idolatry of *Ieroboam*) was charged not to eate or drinke there, till he was returned home: yet would needs abuſe his authority and yeares to divert and controll Gods Command, and attempt the young Prophet to returne, to breake his charge, and to eate and drinke at his houſe. No ſooner had hee perſwaded him ſo to doe, but the Lord ſent an *item* into his heart, to denounce againſt the young Prophet, that he ſhould dye for it: What a ſhame was that unto him? Who but himſelfe drew him into that ſervice? Therefore it was juſt that his owne mouth ſhould pronounce ſentence, as againſt the other, ſo againſt himſelfe, for his inſolencie and uſurping againſt Gods ſolemne commands. But another inſtance I would alſo preſſe, who might ſeeme to be preſſed and provoked to doe the like; and yet eſcaped not cenſure. And this latter example I urge the rather upon this wretched age of wofull time-ſervers, with whom the prints of divine ſoveraignty in Commands, ſeemes to bee wholly worne out and defaced. If there bee any preſſure put upon Miniſters by their Patrones, People or Superiours, which trench upon the word, they preſently flye off from obeying a command according to it, and the ſoveraignty of it, and conſult with fleſh and blood, the conſequences of ſuch an obedience to God: and if they finde, that it is like to become any prejudice to their ſtate and liberty, they thinke it a very rationall thing to obey men before God. So wofully is that impreſſion of Gods ſoveraigne Commands, blotted out in mens Conſciences, that in very deed, the violating thereof is made but a ſport: and the outward reſpects which men have to their name, eaſe, wealth and welfare, waſhes off all reſpects to Gods commands. Tuſh (ſay men) would you have us ruſh our ſelves upon the rockes, and upon the ſnares which are laid for us? Doe you thinke we are ſuch fooles as to betray our ſelves to trouble

1 King. 13.

Equivocating in point of Commands with conſcience for the ſaving of our owne skin, is abhominable.

2 Kings

trouble and need not? We hope we are as honeſt as others, and would be as loth in cold blood, to prevaricate, as others; but being now ſnared, we muſt provide for our ſelves as well as we can, we muſt ſave our ſelves for better times, and not betray our owne ſafety: Our opinion is ſound, and our practice ſhall be honeſt; howbeit if any command of men come betweene to try and compell us, what would you have us to doe? We can diſpenſe ſo with our people, that they ſhall not ſtumble at us; we can ſo order it, that we can confute that with one breath which we allow with another. Oh! thou temporizing hypocrite: is thy conſcience kept in a box (like thoſe witches eyes) to pull out and keep in at thy pleaſure? Doeſt thou (I ſay not reject the paterne of Gods ancient and moderne Confeſſors and Martyrs, Heb. 11. 37. but) the expreſſe charge of commands, that thou ſhouldeſt dare to pleaſe men to diſhonour God?

Exod. 32.

Take therefore that famous example of *Aaron*, that it may give thee thy belly full of thine equivocations and diſtinctions againſt a Command. *Moſes* being gone up into the Mount, the people would needs have a Calfe, and to that end would needs preſſe *Aaron* to make it for them, they knew his authority would carry it through better then their owne, and ſo urge him to bee active in it. What ſhould *Aaron* have done? Surely abhorred the thought of it, and clave to the ſecond Command, with many other to that purpoſe. But here feare or flattery, or infirmity, ſteps in, and makes him a Politician, hee bethinkes himſelfe of a witty trick to out-ſhoot the Divell in his owne bow: for, ſuppoſing they would not eaſily bring their Eare-rings and Jewels to be molten, he tells them, If they would have a Calfe, it muſt be made of their coſtlieſt ornaments, bring him them, and they ſhould heare more: whereas hee ſhould have checkt himſelfe and ſaid; What if they bring them (as indeed they did) wil that diſcharge me? No ſurely: therefore I will put my life into Gods hands, ceaſe to colour againſt Command, and abhorre their motion.

What came of this? Alas! he was taken in his owne ſnare, and ſo was not able to goe backe, but makes them a Calfe. Had he not, think we, infinite many arguments to ſhift off his ſinne? Yes verily, he feared their violence, or was loath to croſſe them too farre: his conſcience was honeſt in the maine, and what ſhould he doe? What? Should they rend him in peeces? He knew *Moſes* would curbe them afterward, but he was not able. But what of all theſe? Could theſe ſhield him from *Moſes* his bitter rebuke, and Gods more bitter wrath? Shouldeſt thou (mine high Prieſt) betray mine honour to the luſt of rebells? Was there none but *Aaron* to make the people naked? Should their father, their nurſe, expoſe them to wrath and vengeance? Oh we ſee, what it coſt him? Nay even Kings themſelves have been ſuch fearefull examples for their audaciouſneſſe, *Gedeon* for his Ephod, *Ioaſh* for hearkning to his Princes and their bribes, *Saul* for ſacrificing without *Samuel*. And ſhall wee venture to violate the Soveraignty of Gods commands? Beware leſt if we dare to doe it, wee pay for it as they: When thoſe Princes of Samaria heard *Iehu's* challenge for the children of *Ahab*, what ſaid they? Behold two Kings could not ſtand before

Judg. 27. 8.
2 Chron. 24. 17.

2 King. 10. 4.

before him, and ſhall we venture? No doubtleſſe; we will ſend in their heads rather. So ſay I, let not any feare or favour of man embolden you to try concluſions with God, to remove his landmarkes, to deſcant upon his Statutes; for if Prophets, Prieſts, Kings, have not beene able to ſtand it out, how much leſſe you! Tranſgreſſe who dare or will, but bring you the heads in baskets to *Iehu*, tender you cloſe obedience to God. The more ye are purſued for conſcience, the more ſticke to it. Caſt not that away to the hunters: As they ſay, the Bezor (whoſe ſtone we prize) underſtands ſhe is hunted for nothing, ſave her ſtone, therefore if the hounds put her hard to it ſhe bites them off, and ſaves her life. Doe not you ſo, leſt the miſery of a loſt conſcience prove more fearefull then all the gaine of your eaſe and ends, can prove ſweet.

2. Branch. Inferiors follow not the example of ſuperiours in the breaking of Gods commands.

And to adde another item to inferiours: If others will be ſo baſe as to betray us, to make us naked, let us winde our cloake the cloſer about us; truſt God, and ſave the darling of our peace entire. If our Miniſters will defend uſury, petty oathes, jeaſtings, riots, abuſing of the Sabboth; let us be ſo much the more reſolved againſt them, and for the Sabbath to keepe it holy, not only as a day of voluntary devotion, at our pleaſure (for ſo wee may grow to ſanctifie one of tenne or twelve aſwell as ſeven) but the eight day, and Lords day [conſecrated by himſelfe (doubtleſſe) by intimation to his Apoſtles and by their practice to the honour of his reſt] from the worke of redemption. And howſoever ſo expreſſe a text for the change and prorogation of the ſeventh to the eight as we might wiſh, be not found; yet (were not our ſinfull hearts prejudiced againſt the power of godlineſſe) wee might rather conclude, that by this ſilence God tries our honeſty then provokes our treachery. If the Lord Jeſus purpoſely would defile and abdicate the ſeventh day Sabbath of the Jew, by lying in the grave that whole day (and no other elſe) that he might early riſe upon the next morrow after the light appeared, (whereas elſe he might have lien that day too:) To this end, that as the firſt Sabbath was devoted to the honour of Gods reſt from his creation; ſo this ſecond might much more be deputed to the honor of the finiſhed redemption, (a far greater worke) ſhall we quarrell with him, and call it a wil-worſhip? No verily, but rather the more we ſee Gods Sabbaths, and their morality oppoſed, the cloſer let us cling to them; let us know that although the meditation of Gods creation and providence be not abandoned by the eight day, yet there is added a more forcible one for us to chew upon: To wit, the excellency of the Evangelicall Sabbath, ſerving to magnifie the power of the reſurrection; which, as it gave our Saviour a reſt from his worke of ſatisfaction, ſo it gave us the full accompliſhment of the merit thereof: for what had his death and grave beene worth to us, without his victory? And what leſſe fruit can we reape thereby then the clearenеſſe of our juſtification? As he ſhewed himſelfe the ſonne of man in dying, ſo doth he ſhew himſelfe the Sonne of God by the power of his riſing, that he might make himſelfe a full witneſſe of a perfect redemption. And ſhall not this eight dayes reſt of his, cauſe a reſt to us? A reſt of peace through pardon, the peace of con-

Note.

Epecially the command of the Sabbath.

Chriſt Jeſus the Lord of the Sabbath tranſlated the reſt of Creation to the reſt of Redemption.

Rom. 4. ult.

Rom. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 20. 21. 22.

2 Kings

conſcience, and joy in the holy Ghoſt? Should theſe things bee ſo darke unto us, or ſo uſeleſſe, that we ſhould queſtion it, whether they are worth a Sabbath or no? Farre bee it from us. But rather let the corruption of men provoke us to keep an holier, cloſer, and not ceremoniouſly to obſerve a more ſpirituall Sabbath then ever wee have done?

Vſe 2. Terror to all that caſt off the yoke of Gods commands.

Pſal. 2. 7.

Secondly, this point is terror to all hypocrites, who being pinched with the authority of the Word [according to it] that is the cloſeneſſe of commands, doe kick and ſpurne at it; and rather then they will be ſubject to it, they caſt it off, and lay it in the dirt. Perhaps, ſo far as it will goe in their own ſtream, they will allow it; but let it pinch them and wring them (as a ſtraight ſhooe wrings the foot) then they caſt off, and will no longer endure it. Thus thoſe, Pſal. 2. are ſaid to caſt off the cords of Chriſt (he means the Jewes and Phariſees) when they felt the ſpiritualneſſe of his kingdome. For the opening of this Uſe, firſt let us ſee the truth of the point in the grounds that hypocrites goe upon. Secondly, the wayes of hypocrites in balking them. Thirdly, the ſhifts they have to ſhift off the dint of pinching Commands. And fourthly, apply the terrour home unto them. For the firſt, leſt any ſhould thinke there are none ſo vile, know it, that they cannot be other, all things conſidered. For firſt their heart is uncleane, and rotten at the core, although they ſeeme in their owne ſight, and in the ſight of others, to be never ſo pure. They love evill, therefore they breake commands naturally; but they keep commands, and doe good onely, ſo farre as it agreeth with their owne ends and purpoſes.

Foure Branches.

1. Branch. Hypocrites their falſe grounds. 1. In breaking Commands.

Secondly, becauſe they are held in and detained violently from that which they aime at: therefore, as a priſoner in his chaines, alway lies at the catch and opportunity to ſeeke his eſcape: ſo doe theſe, whenſoever any colour or evaſion, any ſhift or trick is offered, they cleanly and ſlily winde themſelves out of the authority of God.

Thirdly, becauſe there is a ſtrugling in all ſuch hypocrites to be better thought of then they deſerve, therefore their occupation is perpetually to bribe their owne conſcience, and to delude themſelves with ſome ſhewes of duty, religion, pangs of devotion, paſſions and affections, vows, & purpoſes of good, and to keep up the damme of their own conſciences from breaking in upon them, and yet all this while they have no power to lay hold upon any ſolid bottomes of truth, either threats, promiſes or commands.

Fourthly, its certaine, that every hollow heart doth ſeeke finally her owne eaſe, and quiet of carnall liberty, and to be rid of the dint and power of commands from moleſting her, that ſo by her cunning tricks and diſtinctions, ſhe might at laſt ſcrue herſelfe into a content of the fleſh, and to ſtop the mouth of conſcience from any more accuſation: And although this cannot at the firſt be attained while there remaines any ſparke of truth in the ſoule; yet by degrees, and by oft declinnig the dint of ſolemne commands, it comes to paſſe that a baſe heart winnes a preſumptuous habit to herſelfe, and finding a corrupt eaſe therein, reſolves to hold it as ſtrongly, as an honeſt heart would preſerve ſound peace and eaſe of conſcience by the promiſe. And ſo being

being reſolved to hold whatſoever falſe peace ſhe gets, and to loſe it upon no tearmes of a better condition, ſhe outgrowes all former tenderneſſe of heart which was wont to attend her, and nouzells herſelfe in that which ſhe feeles, as if it were a ſure bottome, eaſily beleeving that to be, which ſhe would have: And this for the firſt ground of Terror.

Application of this firſt ground.

Now to apply it: Conſider what a fearfull ſtate and condition this is; what wofull rotten grounds theſe are of peace. Who is there ſo vile and lewd, (except inchanted by the Divell, and held in the ſnares of his owne luſts) who durſt commit himſelfe to the ſea of a religious courſe in ſo broken a Barke. Take but one example hereof, recorded (I thinke) for the nonce, to ſcare all eluders and ſhifters with Gods Commands. And that is *Balaam*: who having his charge given him ſolemnly by the Lord, not to goe with thoſe meſſengers of *Balac*, who came with bribes and preſents in their hands, to procure the ſervice of his Sorcery and witch craft to curſe Iſrael: feeling himſelfe ſore pinched with this command, and yet having no reſt in his owne covetous heart, to forgoe the wages of iniquity: ſtudies how he might reconcile Gods ends and his owne: And, ſeeing that could not bee compaſſed, by a direct refuſall to goe; therefore firſt he bids the men ſtay till the morning; and in the meane while he ſo blind-folds his own eyes, as to dreame, that if God would give him leave to goe, he might goe. But what a deluding thought was that, when as his conſcience told him, God had denied it before? Well, by going to God to blanch over the matter, *viz.* That if he would give him leave to goe, he would doe no otherwiſe then he was bidden; the Lord connives at his going: And what doth he? He takes it very gladly, and makes uſe of it; but from whence is it that he doth ſo? Surely from no other bottome, ſave this, that by his going, hee hoped (one way or other) to attaine thoſe ends, which elſe hee knew he ſhould not; whereas (if hee had meant truely) he would have abhorred ſuch an occaſion as laid a blocke in his way to fall at. And how did he goe forward? Surely with a foole-hardy courage, and a peeviſh reſolution to get his booty; for when Gods Angell croſſed him, opened his Aſſes mouth to convince him, ſo blinded he was, that he deſpiſed it, and ſmote her; whereas he ſhould have returned home, and abhorred his blanching with Gods command. And was he ſenſible of himſelfe in all this his race? No, but ſtill impudently, tels God (when he ſaw there was no remedy) he would goe backe, if he might not go? What was that, but to upbraid God for reſiſting him, having before given him leave? And ſo he proceeded in his journey, and ſought divinations, that is, caſt about with himſelfe how he might curſe the people, and get his ends: And, when the Lord croſſed him ſtill, yet (to ſhew what mettall he was made of) rather then he would loſe his booty, he adviſes *Baalac* how to procure God to curſe them by provoking them to Idolatry and uncleanneſſe: And this was the whole courſe of this Hypocrite in croſſing the command of God; having once won ground for himſelfe by his firſt trick, lo, he hardens himſelfe ſo faſt in his treachery, that he ſees not his owne hypocriſie:

Num. 22. 19.

Verſe 20, 21

Ibid.

And

2 Kings

And what was his end? Surely, notwithſtanding all his tricks, yet he could neither avoid the cenſure of God, nor eſcape vengeance, when it fell point blanke upon him, for he was devoured by the ſword, he & all his nation, both Kings and people. Oh let not this terror paſſe from us in vaine! Aſſuredly, whoſoever ſhall ſhuffle with Gods commands, and harden his heart by his owne ſubtilty, to ſinne without ſenſe; commonly the Lord ſuffers them to goe on blinde-folds, without any hope of remorſe, till he teare them in peeces like a Lion, and there bee no remedy. Dally not with Gods commands; for, it will cauſe the conſcience to fret ſecretly like a moth without ſenſe, and thats the next way for the Lord to teare it in peeces, and to ſend it to hell, that there at leaſure it may feele that which before it would take no notice of: And all to teach men to abhorre the breaking of commands under colours of diſtinctions.

Jude 11. Num.31.8.

Fearful judgement of God upon hollow hearts in diſpencing with commands.

2. Branch. The trickes and wayes of hypocrites in breaking of commands.

The ſecond Branch, by which I would make way for this Terror, is, to lay downe the ſeverall wayes by which hypocrites do caſt off Gods commands when they pinch them: The view whereof will aggravate the terror exceedingly. And theſe briefly may be ſummed up in theſe heads following. Firſt, hypocrites caſt off pinching commands, by denying and avoiding the truth and realneſſe of the command: And thus many ſhunne the dint of a ſpirituall command to keepe the Sabbath holy, by denying the whole morality of it, and calling the authority of the fourth Commandement into queſtion and ſcruple, that ſo under that buckler, they may walke on deſperately and ſenſleſly in the breaking of it, whether Miniſters by not preaching, or people by not ſanctifying it. Secondly, by a baſe ſhifting off the knowledge of a command, that having no knowledge thereof, they might lurk in their diſobedience the more ſweetly. Thus Joh.3.20. They who hate the light, come not at it, that ſo they may lurke as unconvinced of their own ſinne, which (if convinced) they muſt needs abandon. So alſo thoſe Jewes, who being urged by our Saviour to anſwer whether the Miniſtery of *Iohn* were from heaven or from men? They conſulted together thus, If we ſay it was from heaven, he will aske, why then did you not beleeve it? If from men, the people will ſtone us, ſeeing all held *Iohn* to be a Prophet. They reſolve therefore to anſwer, we cannot tell; which though it were falſe, and a deluding of their conſcience, yet, they waſht their hands of it the more eaſily. Thirdly, if they needs acknowledge commands in ſpite of them, yet they take away and diminiſh from the extent of a command, and limit it to a narrower extent then it reaches unto. Thus *Adam* and *Eve* were content to abridge the ſtrictneſſe of the charge, and to reſtraine it as themſelves pleaſed, adding a peradventure to Gods abſoluteneſſe; and ſo of an whole charge they made but halfe an one. Thus the Phariſees by their Sophiſtry cut off the ſpirituall part of the morall Law, and they limited it to the outward act, by which they eſtabliſhed their own eaſe in the keeping thereof literally.

1. By avoiding the realneſſe of commands.

2. Shifting off the knowledge of them.

Marke 11.31.

3. By diminiſhing their extent.

Gen.3.5.

Matth.cap.5.v. 6.7.

Fourthly, when they are beaten off here then they ſhunne a command by oppoſing one againſt another, that ſo they may deſtroy both. And thus did thoſe Phariſees by their Corban: They imagined that it could

4. By oppoſing of one command to another.

Matth.15.4.

could not be denied but there was good uſe of offering to holy ends, and it ſeemed a pious act for a child to nurſe a decayed parent: Now for their private Corban, they diſcharge the child from his obedience to father or mother, (as Papiſts doe at this day debarre parents of their children, by ſnaring them with vowes againſt their conſent) whereas firſt it ſhould be decided whether of the two commands were moſt neceſſary to bee done? That ſo the one might give place, the other might prevaile. Fifthly, hypocrites ſhunne the dint of commands by falſe plea of preſidents, and examples of ſuch as God hath diſpenced with (in ſome ſpeciall caſes) and therefore, ſay they, why may not we bee ſpared aſwell as ſuch? As ſome have ſtollen other goods, ſome have been tollerated in their officious lies, others have beene allowed other liberties, or at leaſt been connived at and pardoned in them; why not they aſwell? Whereas ſome of their examples are facts of boldneſſe, and preſumptuous pollicy, 1 Sam. 20. 6. as *Davids* anſwer to *Abimeles*, and the apology which he put into *Ionathans* head, to ſtop *Sauls* mouth withall: Others although God winked at, yet he allowed not. Sixtly, hypocrites elude the force of Gods commands by the adding of new commands, which God never made, as ſuppoſing that hereby they may well be ſpared from obeying ſuch as God hath commanded. And this is an old and beaten way of hypocrites, to load themſelves with outward burdens and impoſts of their owne, that they may ſeeme to be farre from them that breake commands: They will not ſpare their fleſh, but impoſe more then God could finde in his heart to impoſe; If he call for an hin of oyle or wine, they will offer him whole Baths and Buts thereof, yea rivers and floods; if God require of them a faſt once by the weeke, they will faſt twice, if he appoint them a ſacrifice of their flocke, a ſheep or bullocke, they will outvie him, and offer him the fruit of their owne loines and wombes in ſacrifice; by which ſuperogating, they doubt not, but to be accounted through-obeyers of his owne commands; and by this pollicy our Papiſts and formall worſhippers, at this day ſubſiſt, and juſtifie themſelves, imagining themſelves to be worthy obedients to commands, becauſe they deviſe ſo many which God never dreamt of. But you muſt conſider in the meane while, that the commands which themſelves deviſe may bee obeyed by their owne ſtrength and power, and ſerve to while and keepe them occupied that Gods commands may be diſpenced withall: They are no ſuch great friends of voluntary, as they are ſworne foes of neceſſary commands: As it was ſaid of *Ottomans* horſe, That where he once ſet his feet, graſſe would no more grow after; ſo where the devotions of theſe hypocrites take place, Religion and the power of godlineſſe wanze and periſh. Laſtly, hypocrites corrupt the authority of Gods commands, by excepting and cavilling againſt the ſtrictneſſe thereof, with carnall probabilities & reaſons of their owne. Fleſh inclines to liberty, and when once that can be eſtabliſht, each pretence running in the ſtreame of fleſh, makes it ſeeme to be reaſonable. There is no command of God but admits ſome colour and objection of a carnall heart to gainſay it. But of this in the next Branch.

5. By falſe plea of preſidents and examples.

See Gen. 30. 39. 41. 42.

Exod. 1. 19. 20.

Ex. 12. 35. 36.

6. By adding of new commands of their owne.

Mica 6.

Luke 18. 12.

7. By cavilling at the ſtrictneſſe of them.

2 Kings

Application of this second.

Esay 54.ult.

John.3.19.

Act.28.

Matth.23.ult.

But to apply this Branch also with Terror, consider, Oh ye hypocrites, who have so many wayes to crosse Gods commands, and to nible off here one peece thereof, there another, till you have quite overthrowne all; whether (I say) ever any prevailed against God who contended with him about the soveraignty of his Prerogative? Shall he not most righteously condemne all such? Was there ever any that resisted God and prospered? Shall not this be the condemnation of the world, that light came, but they hid themselves from it, and all, because their workes are evill? Is it not just, that those who winke with their eyes, and will not see, should be left to themselves, to be stone blinde? That their hearts should bee as hard as brawne, so that they should be senseless of the wrath which hangs over them? Doe we thinke all those woes denounced against pharisees and hypocrites shall rot in the skie? Such as by their owne traditions have destroyed the Law of God, and neither will enter themselves, nor suffer them that would to goe to Heaven? Who hate with deadly feud all such as resist their inventions, and would not only draw bloud from them, but even shed their heart bloud and bowells to the earth if they could? Shall not all the bloud of them which they have spilt from the bloud of *Abel* to this day, be required of them? Shall not the Lord turne backe upon them all those obtruded worships of theirs, as fulsome? Shall not all their labours be forfeit? What a terror should this be to all Popish pharisees, that when they looke for deepe thanke from God for the high service they have thought to have done, hee shall choke them with their owne morsells, and grudge them therewith till they come out at their nostrills? What is so fearfull as to lay heaps upon heaps, and dye of thirst? To hear God answer them & say, Who requireth these things at your hands? Let them who set you on worke pay you your wages? To lose the day at Law, is some sorrow: But to lose the day in the solemne judgement of God, and to be sent to those Idolls, inventions and devotions, which they set up in Gods roome, which cannot helpe them, how fearefull will it be? When the Lord shall say, Bring me but the entire obedience of heart to one of my Commands, to my Sabbaths, to my Sacraments; prove but this one thing, that you have walked humbly and meekly with God, that you have kept your selves unspotted of the world, served your time and generation wisely, abstained from fleshly lusts, abhorred form, & clave to the power of godlinesse, and I will save you: But alas! not one drop or dram of such obedience can be brought forth: Tell me how just and righteous shall ye your selves confesse your condemnation to be? Surely you shall be speechlesse: Here you confound others with your terrors, and make them so, but there your selves shall be so confounded, that you shall be strucke dumbe, and not be able to gainsay; nay you shall subscribe to your owne doome. But I must remember my selfe, and here breake off, though abruptly, leaving the third ground of Terror and Application of it, with other Uses to the next Lecture.

CHAP.

THE NINETEENTH LECTVRE continued upon the 14. VERSE.

VERSE XIV.

Then he went downe and waſhed himſelfe ſeven times in Iorden, and his fleſh came againe unto him as the fleſh of a little child, and he was cleane.

TO proceed (Brethren) where we left laſt, and to conclude this Uſe of Terror; let us alſo (in the third place) obſerve by what ſhifts and cunning theſe hypocrites elude Gods Commands; even with Arguments ſuggeſted by their carnall reaſon, which is as a ſpring never drawne dry, affoording them ſtill one pretence after another in all parts and points of duty occaſioned unto them. Take but two or three examples in this kinde: Firſt, thoſe two acts of *Saul* recorded in the thirteenth and fifteenth Chapters of the firſt of *Samuel*. Then that other of *Ieroboam*, about the thirteenth of the firſt of Kings. For the former, God commands *Saul* not to meddle with ſacrificing or ſanctifying the battell till *Samuel* came. For the more deep triall what honeſty was in his heart, the Lord detaines *Samuel* longer then the dayes appointed, and what doth *Saul*? Surely he falles to offer ſacrifice himſelfe. When *Samuel* comes, hee askes him what hee had done? Hee telles him, he had given the adventure to breake the charge; but he was moved thereto by weighty motives. Firſt, *Samuel* came not within the limited ſpace, and that ſeemed to licenſe him to offer ſacrifice, and to releaſe the charge. Then ſecondly, *Samuel* was but a ſubject, a man unskilfull in the affaires and ſeaſons of warre: himſelfe was a Martiall man, of great wiſedome in that kinde, and therefore in ſo doubtfull a caſe, fitter to determine what was to be done. Thirdly, the Philiſtines were now come upon him, and he was unprepared; ſo that, had he not beſtir'd him, they might in likelihood have ſuddenly ſurprized him. Fourthly, the ſouldiers that hee had, were ſlipt away from him upon *Samuels* delay, and ſo hee was in

3. Branch. The cunning and colours of hypocrites to ſhift off Commands.

1 Sam. 13. 8 14.

1. Inſtance.

2 Kings

perill to be deſerted, and to lacke ſtrength. Fifthly, hee was very religious and devout, in that he would not ſuffer the Sacrifice and Prayer to be neglected, notwithſtanding the danger. Sixthly, it ſeemed to croſſe ſome other commands of God, to deſiſt from ſacrificing at that inſtant, and not to haſten it. For why? The ſtaying upon *Samuels* comming, had been to preferre Sacrifice before Mercy to mens lives. Seventhly, it ſeemed to croſſe Providence, when God had offered an opportunity of fight, upon better conditions, to neglect it, and to venture upon more unequall termes afterward: Theſe and many more cavils hee pretended: But none of them could (notwithſtanding the colourableneſſe thereof) prevaile againſt an expreſſe command: and therefore *Samuel* denounceth againſt him, that in all theſe paſſages of his carnall wiſedome, he was but a foole, and ſhould bee ſtript of his Kingdome. God knew well enough what ſtraits he was in, & yet knew alſo, that he had experience ſufficient of Gods power, in all theſe ſtraits (if he had not had a baſe heart of treachery) which could have ſtood between him and his feares: ſo that he ſhould not have needed to have fallen to his ſhifts.

2. Inſtance. 1 Sam. 15. 3.

The other inſtance of *Saul* is in Chap. 15. There the Lord betruſted him the ſecond time with another cloſe tryall of his loyall heart, putting him upon the deſtruction of *Amalek*, commanding him not to ſpare any, old, young, high or low, fat or leane, but to kill all. One would have thought that the former triall had been a watchword ſufficient; but a baſe heart will be baſe when all is done: therefore in that buſineſſe alſo, he faulters fearfully; killing the baſer and meaner ſort of people, the leane and worthleſſe cattell: but keeping the richer ſort of people, and the fat cattle alive. Now, when *Samuel* comes to him to take an account, what doth hee? Hee magnifies his obedience at the firſt; but by and by being convinced of his falſhood, hee falles to dawbing with untempered mortar. Doubtleſſe, the bottome was a covetous heart, turning after the ſpoile: but he had colours enow to defend it. For why? Was not the killing of ſo many fat cattell (in ſhew) a prejudice to mercie, ſince that they might have filled many hungry bellies? Yea, and to piety alſo, ſince they might have made many a ſacrifice to God? But alas! to plead mercy or ſacrifice againſt a charge, is to bee wiſer then God, that is, a ſtarke foole. And ſo was he. The like were his other trickes: That the people reſerved them: And, he feared their violence if hee had reſiſted them: (a very lye; for they feared him extreamly, as appeares by the vow which hee bound them in, Chap. 14.) But could all theſe ſhifts profit him? No ſurely: Hee was convinced to be hollow, and then threatned the ſecond time with the loſſe of his Kingdome for the breach of the command.

1 King. 12. 26.

The ſecond inſtance is *Ieroboam*: God gave him his charge to keepe his ſtatutes, and promiſed to make him a ſure Kingdome. What doth he? As ſoone as he had gotten into the ſaddle, what thoughts doth he apprehend? Surely, leaving the promiſe of eſtabliſhing his Kingdome, he caſts with himſelfe what would follow upon the going up of the ten Tribes to Jeruſalem to worſhip: hee imagined, that it would

prove

prove an occaſion of ſtealing away their hearts to the government of Juda: and therefore he gives God over, warps to himſelfe a better way of ſafety, ſets up two Calves in Dan and Bethel, to keep the people at home. And what (thinke wee) were his pretences? Very many. For why? Was there no other place might ſerve to worſhip in, ſave one? Did not *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Iacob* ſet up their Altars and worſhip God? Nay, were there not Altars built in Canaan by the command of God, and by the two Tribes and an halfe? And did not *Samuel* build an Altar by occaſion of the Philiſtines invaſion? And beſides, what? Was it not equall, that he, being a King called by God, (as well as *Reboboam*) might ordaine a place for his ſubjects to worſhip God as well as he? Did God by name forbid this, or tye him to the Temple? And moreover, if God had ſo delighted in the Temple-worſhip, would he have cut off the Kingdome from the houſe of *David*, and ſetled it upon him? Beſides all this, what? Could nothing content men but the Temple? Hee did not ſet up his Calves againſt the Temple, but for the worſhip of the true God: If indeed hee had done it for idolatry, it were ſinfull; but he ordained it for God. And as for thoſe reſemblances of Calves, which hee deviſed, why? Was not the Temple full of Lyons and Cherubims, and ingraven formes? And to conclude, although a Prophet came to denounce againſt his Altars, yet was he not devoured by a Lyon? And his ſonne *Abijah*, who would not cloſe with his Idols, died hee not an untimely death? And did not he ſurvive and proſper by this worſhip of his? Lo, what a world of trickes and ſhifts hee could alledge! But nothing could ſerve his turne againſt ſo ſtrict a charge as the ſecond Command, wherewith hee ſtood charged, ſtill the wrath of God purſued him, and cut him off at length, making him a very by-word, *Ieroboam* the ſonne of *Nebat*, who made Iſrael to ſinne. So that, let hypocrites turne themſelves into never ſo many colours; and ſcrue themſelves never ſo ſubtilly into their diſtinctions, they doe but ſo much the more incenſe God againſt them, and provoke him to unmaske and diſcover them to the world, to be ſuch as they are, till unavoidable deſtruction at laſt come upon them.

Gen. 21. 33. Gen. 26. 25. Gen. 35. 14.

1 Sam. 7. 9.

Endleſſe were it to ſpeake of all. *Ananias* and *Sapphira* (thoſe ſacrilegious hypocrites) had firſt conſented to bee of the forwardeſt in zeale to the Churches ſervice: And, they would ſell all, and lay it at the Apoſtles feet. After, through temptation of Satan, they conſulted to keepe away a part of the price, and yet pretended to give all. What thinke we? Had they not colours? Yes doubtleſſe. For why? Did all ſell their eſtates for the Church? Or, did many give ſuch a portion as they gave, (who yet perhaps had as great meanes?) And was it not well that they did as they did? Or, did God urge more from them then they could well ſpare? Should they ſo ſuccour others as to undoe and endanger themſelves? Or, could conſequent difficulties at the firſt ſo appeare, as they did after? Or could they well change their tale to the Apoſtles, after it was once given out that they had ſold all? Would not that have diſcredited their zeale? All theſe are faire colours: But for all theſe, foraſmuch as the pinch of the command of

3. Inſtance. Act. 5. 5.

God, (to keepe their vow) cauſed them to play the hypocrites, and to caſt it off; the Lord (we ſee) uſed *Peter* as an inſtrument both to deteſt, convince, and ſentence them with ſuch a doome, as made all the Church to tremble at the like falſhood and lying againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

cation

Chriſt at his ſecond coming will waſh off all the colours of hypocrites with his terrors.

To apply this terrour alſo, and ſo to conclude the Uſe: Let all ſuch be affrighted, to conſider what the end of flatterers and time-ſervers ſhall be! The 2. Command hath in it a ſad and ſolemne intent, and extent, to take up the whole man for God, in the duties of his worſhip. Not onely urging us to abhor all falſe worſhip, Popiſh worſhip, groſſe Idoll-worſhip: But to embrace the moſt pure and exact manner of worſhip, which poſſibly we can: and to reject any ſuch dregs, as might, in the leaſt ſort, defile the ſpirit of the worſhipper. How dares any man then, in this caſe, to come in, and ſtop Gods mouth with diſtinctions and pretences? Thinke we that God will be mocked? Although now while they goe with the ſtreame of the time, they may ſeeme pardonable, yet when God ſhall come in vengeance to take a ſevere and ſtrict ſurview of the actions of Hypocrites, doe we thinke they ſhall ſo

Matth.12.

eaſily eſcape? Could the Lord Ieſus in the dayes of his abaſement take upon him ſo ſeverely, as to make a three ſtringed whip, & ſcourge out thoſe buyers and ſellers in the Temple, to overthrow their Tables, and to ſcatter their money about the ground, and all for the violation of one Command: and ſhall he not (much more) take upon him (think we) when he ſhall come, not as a meeke Lambe, not as riding upon an Aſſe colt, but as the Lyon of the Tribe of *Iuda*, triumphantly riding upon the clouds of glory, and decking himſelfe with ſtrength and revenge, as with a garment? Shall then theſe breakers of his commands carry it ſo ſmoothly away? Shall they not flee from the preſence of

Acts 5.5.

this terrible Judge? Could *Peter*, a feely man, being armed with the authority of this Judge, with one word of his mouth, throw downe thoſe two hypocrites *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, and lay them dead upon the place: and ſhall not the Judge himſelfe, comming in perſon, much more, with one frowne of his irefull face, cruſh all ſuch daring enemies of his glory, as have made his ſolemne Commands, idle ſcarebugs, and have turned them into ſhadowes? Now, whiles the conſciences of men are inchanted with hopes of preferment, with eaſe, with the gliſtering ſhewes of pompe and ſtate, the examples of their betters, and the common ſtreame of carnall worſhippers: when they ſee the power of truth to be troden downe, and the ſincerity of Religion to be diſcarded; its an eaſie thing for them to beare downe commands, and not to be troubled at it: but when as the Lord ſhall open and enlarge conſcience to the uttermoſt, and bid her ſpeake out, and not be afraid to beare witneſſe againſt all breakers of his ſolemne commands; ſhall they then (thinke we) ſet up their hornes ſo high as now

Dan.5.7.

they doe? Shall not rather their knees knock together, as *Belſhazzars* did, in the midſt of his quaffing in the cups of the Temple?

Pſal.2.5.

When the terrible Judge ſhall not write onely upon the wall, but thunder with his voice againſt all that have brake his cords, and caſt his chaines from them, ſhall they be able to endure him? when all

their

their maſkers ſhall be pulled off from their faces, and all things ſhall be naked in the ſight of him that judgeth, and conſcience ſhall aske them queſtions without admitting any ſhuffles or equivocations, ſhall they ſubſiſt and hold up their faces? Then conſcience ſhall put them to it, and ſay, doſt thou thinke in thy very ſoule, that the Lords day are dayes to be prophaned with unlawfull games and paſtimes, with drinkings and dauncings? Speake truth now, doſt thou thinke in conſcience that thoſe who walke cloſely with God, maintaining the power of Religion in their lives, are the worſt men living? Or doſt thou thinke in thy conſcience thou didſt well in leaving thy flocke and charge at randon, and ſpending thy time in dependances, hopes of promotion, eaſe, pleaſure, and ſuch like? Doſt thou thinke in thy conſcience that any thing can purge out the defilement of Popiſh Idolatry and ſuperſtition? Will ſcraping of the ſtones of the houſe fretted with a canker of incurable leproſie, ſerve the turne? Can any thing (ſave onely pulling downe the houſe, and making it a heape of rubbiſh) make it cleane? Speake as in conſcience thou thinkeſt, ſhould man in his oppoſing Gods commands be obeyed before God himſelfe, or God before him? If thou wert now to beginne againe, durſt thou breake the leaſt of his commands, and teach others to doe ſo? Durſt thou lend thine authority, preſence, countenance, tongue or pen, to defend the breach of any command of mine? Oh, (I ſay) when conſcience ſhall ſet thee thus upon the rack, and ſtretch every joint of thy ſoule upon the wheele of Gods ſtrict inquiſition, will there be any place for trickes and evaſions? No, no. Thinke ſadly then of the ſadneſſe of commands, (Oh all ye preſumptuous hypocrites) while there is ſeaſon for it: Now the Divell ſets you upon a pinacle, and ſhewes you all the glory of this ſenſuall and carnall world, and offers you the greateſt reward for your breaking of the moſt chiefe and ſad commands; its now a merry world (if it would laſt alway) to breake commands! Who rule the roſt, or carry matters more boldly, or gaſter other more terribly, then ſuch as cut off commands moſt deſperately! But lo, there will be bitterneſſe in the end! You ſhall not alway carry it at your pleaſure, none to gainſay you! This Judge of all fleſh, one day ſhall turne your triumphs, and ſcornes, and inſolencies, into a moſt ſad & ſorrowfull dejectedneſſe, one day your hearts ſhall melt as water, and your countenances ſhall fall downe as *Cains* did, after God had convinced him of his cruelty and bloudſhed! Think of it betimes in Gods fear, its not for the honor of our God, our conſuming fire, to ſuffer every bold breaker of the commands, to lurke and lye ſafe in his den! No: God ſhall finde them out to be diſſemblers: The Lord Jeſus ſhall not then flatter them, but ſet their ſinne in order before them; therefore let the terrors of God pierce you now, let rottenneſſe enter into your bones, and let the voice of a commanding God, cauſe the lips to quiver, and your bellies to tremble! feare him that is the great commander of the world, who hath chaines for Princes, and can binde Kings in fetters of iron, yea can caſt ſoul and body into hell: I ſay, feare him: If he were ſo terrible to *Saul* in the words of a weake Prophet, *Samuel*; if now hee be ſo potent in the voice

Heb. 4. 13.

Gen. 4. 9. Heb. 12. ult.

Hab. 3.

Pſal. 149. 8.

1 Sam. 15. 16.

2 Kings

voice of a convincing Preacher; What ſhall hee then be in his owne voice and preſence, when the mountaines ſhall rend in ſunder, and the frame of things be diſolved? So much for the former Branch of this ſecond Uſe.

2. Branch. Terror to all profane ones. Pſal. 2. Pſal. 12. Iob 21, 14.

For the latter ſort briefly: if this point juſtly terrifie all hypocrites for blanching with God: how much more then doth it condemne all profane and profeſſed rebels, who doe walke and trade (without remorſe) in the open breaking of Commands? Who ſay to God, Depart from us: who caſt away his cords, and breake his bands in ſunder: who ſay, Our tongues are our owne, wee will ſpeake as we will, and what Lord ſhall controll us? Who proclaime their ſin as Sodom: and ſay, If this be to be proud, I will bee prouder: more uncleane, ſweare ten to one, breake all Sabbaths; that evill I doe, I will doe it: and, I care for none of theſe ſtrict and ſevere urgers of Commands, I will be the worſe for them. Well, goe on, you ſhall have your belly full in hell of your owne will: There you ſhall ſweare, and curſe, and blaſpheme God, and pay for it all the while: therefore if you will bee filthy, be filthy ſtill: Adde to the number, and fulfill the meaſure of your abominations; goe forward, you can but goe to hell, therefore take your pleaſure: Know, that hee who ſets up Altar againſt Altar, and his will againſt Gods, a cloſe following of his luſts, his cups, his harlots, his oppreſſion, pride, envy, againſt Gods cloſe Commands; ſhall apply all his cloſeſt plagues and vengeance againſt ſuch, and whoſoever ſhall riſe up againſt God in judgement, *Eſa.* 54. him ſhall God moſt righteouſly condemne. Oh thinke of it, you that forget God! Shall not the hypocrites avoid everlaſting burnings, who doe but adulterate the purity of cloſe Commands: and you ſhall eſcape, who diſanull them? You walke as the forlorne ranke in the face of the Canon, and what wonder if you be ſhot all to pieces? And, all who will deſperately follow your ſteps, let them know they goe ſtraight forward, neither turning to left hand, nor to right, to the Bethſhemeſh of deſtruction. Its terrible to heare of, and ſee the preſent plagues of ſuch, even here; ſome open defiers of the Sabbath to be ſtruck mad; others in their fencing upon that day, to fall downe dead; a third in ſhooting off his recoyling gun, to be beaten to ſhivers; the end of proud rebels is terrible in this world, *Iezabels, Sauls, Herods:* But the whole of their miſery here, is not the tenth of that hereafter; the day is to come, wherein the Lord will cry, Aha; I will be avenged of mine enemies! I will laugh at their deſtruction! I will make my blade fat with their bloud: And when I have done, I will take as little thought for their woe, as they did for my Commands! Oh tremble at this!

Rev. 22. Eſay 54. Pſal. 50. Eſay 1.

Vſe 3. Examination.

I proceed to the third uſe of the point, and that is Examination. Is it ſo, that the commands of God muſt be obey'd, according to them, that is, their intent and extent; and that they are ſo ſad and cloſe things? Oh then! in the feare of God try we our ſelves, whether they be ſo to us or not. It imports us exceedingly to doe it: for if God be ſad and we be ſlight: if his iſſue be to enquire after cloſe obeying; but we onely looke at the ſurface and outſides of duty, taking what wee pleaſe, and ſoumming off the fat and eaſie part, leaving the leane and more

more unwelcome part to whoſe will; we ſhall finde a wrong bargaine of it. The eyes of God are piercing eyes, and looke over the whole earth, where he may finde cloſe, ſtrict and ſad obeyers of his voyce (as he ſaith Eſay 50.) and there is his delight. But as for him that with-drawes himſelfe, and ſecretly (like that *Iudas*) whips out from his fellowes for his owne ends, his ſoule ſhall have no delight in him. Therefore in ſuch bad times as theſe, wherein every one will be religious, but few or none cloſe with the power of commands: how imports it every of us (Brethren) to let looſe ſtuffe goe, & to try our ſelves touching the ſoules concurrence with God in this Soveraignty of his Commands? And, becauſe (me thinkes) I ſee you to be deſirous to try your ſelves about this, but want direction how to do it aright; therefore I will lay down ſome ſuch rules of direction as (through mercy) may ſweetly ſearch every ſuch heart as is willing to come to the touch-ſtone, and leave it ſound and ſincere: or, if it ſhall diſcover it ſelfe to be otherwiſe, then to looke to it ſelfe, and to abhorre all ſuch lets as it ſhall finde to hinder it from this cloſeneſſe and faithfulneſſe in obeying commands.

Heb. 10. 38.

Firſt, that ſoule which obeyes cloſely, is very active and lively in her enquiring after the true and plaine intent and extent of Gods commands, dare not flatter it ſelfe in her owne way and eaſe, but ſuſpects her ſelfe ſtill in her obedience, that it is too looſe, too eaſie, and too ſlight to be good. She deſires to goe downe right with Gods commands: and having found out, Rom. 12. 2. what that good & acceptable will of God is, then nakedly ſhe deſires to cloſe with it, come what come will of it: whereas the hypocrite is of a cleane contrary ſtraine. For why? having a guilty conſcience of withdrawing a part of the heart from God, it is death for him to come to the triall. *Saul* was as a Beare haled to the ſtake when he came to *Samuels* inquiry, becauſe he knew himſelfe crazy. So *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, when they came under *Peters* inquiſition; Sold yee it indeed for ſo much? Fell down dead. Oh! the hollow heart ſhrugges and ſhrinkes at the extent of Commands; cannot endure to thinke them larger then it ſelfe is willing to doe them. If ſhe ſhould heare of a rule of more cloſeneſſe then ſhe can admit, ſhe muſt needs bewray her ſelfe, which ſhe is loth to do. Oh! how deſirous a baſe heart is to get abatements of commands. There is no man ſo forward to urge the uttermoſt allowance of the weight of gold, that his light peeces might paſſe for currant; as an hypocrite craves ſtill for allowance to his ſlight obedience. It kils his heart to heare of the ſtrictneſſe of a Sabbath, what the rules of a lawful Faſt are, to prepare himſelfe to the Sacrament, to heare the Word, to deny himſelfe, to be tied to doe, or take good in company, to walke unſpotted of the world, to oppreſſe none by fraud, uſury, hardneſſe: Alas! his Trade lies in this kinde, take him off that & you kill him. See 1 King. 22. *Ahab* being urged to call for a Prophet of God, ſent for him: But as the Meſſenger went for him, in his returne hee entreats him that his words might bee like the words of the foure hundred Prophets: and that hee would not bee too ſtrict. But the cloſer obeyer is a cloſe inquirer, like *Micaja*, who would not bee pulled to the right

Trials of cloſe obedience. 1. Triall. She is truly willing to know the uttermoſt of the truth.

1 Sam. 15. 12.

Acts 5. 5.

2Kings

right or left hand from God; he is a willing perſon to bee informed about the nakedneſſe and ſimplicity of commands, deſirous to know the hardeſt. Thus *Iob* cap.34.and verſe 32. ſaith, If I faile that which I ſee not, doe thou teach me: Thus *David*, Search me O Lord and try me, if there be any way of evill in me: Not, that they have not much corruption, and come farre ſhort; but yet they have no treacherous heart of withdrawing, but rather an entire affection to be equall to Commands: And as the heart of an hypocrite doth infinitely diſobey: So, the ſoule of a beleever hath a boundleſſe unlimited deſire to obey a word, according to a word, in which regard its called a perfect heart, becauſe it would be ſo, and mournes that it cannot; as a naturall childe is troubled that it cannot doe the fathers will to the full, and therefore doth what it can to the uttermoſt. Try we our ſelves then in this: Do we wiſh that the rule were crooked, that we might crooke our owne way? Doe we tremble and ſtart at the cloſeneſſe of Gods ſoveraigne Commands, ſaying, Theſe are hard things, who then ſhall be ſaved? Its a ſigne we are hollow; and if we could, we would bee willingly ignorant, that we might live the ſweet life of an ideot: But, doe wee preſſe after light, information, reſolution, and when we have it welcome it and obey it? Doe we deſire that we might live under a convincing Word and Miniſtery? Doe we count it our happineſſe that the righteous ſmite us? Are we willing (upon better information) to undoe our errors, to beginne againe anew, rather then we would ſtill erre? Surely its a ſigne of an honeſt heart, cloſing with Commands?

2 Pet.2.5.6.

2. Triall. She is tender to obey.

Secondly, an honeſt obeyer of Commands, hath a ſpeciall tenderneſſe of heart, and ſoundneſſe of judgement, to diſcerne and to cloſe with commands, to abhorre and to abandon the contrary. I may compare a cloſe heart in theſe two, to a skilfull muſitian, and to the tender ey-lid. A muſitian that hath exact skill on the lute or viall, will lay his eare to the ſtrings, and by his quicke diſcerning will preſently finde out the leaſt jarre of his diſtuned inſtrument. Another man would judge that there is very good muſicke, but he cannot reſt ſo content, but ſtill is putting downe, or winding up his pinne and ſtring till his eare bee pleaſed. Oh! there be many ſecret jarres in the ſpirit of a good Soule, which others ſee not, and therefore applaud, and commend; but hee cannot allow himſelfe in them; he counts not himſelfe thereby juſtified, he diſcernes the jarre of his heart (though others like his muſicke never ſo) and perceives which way his heart windes, and doubles, flagges and faulters; as in keeping of a Sabbath, in hearing the Word, in the end and ſcope of his actions, and is never well till his heart be in tune: And ſo it is with him in his affection, his heart ſmites him for that jarre: as *Iehoſhaphat* having wound in himſelfe into an Idolatrous company, and hearing his foure hundred Prophets flatter him, could not be quiet, but ſtarted at it (as a man out of his place) Is there not here (ſaith he) ever a Prophet of the Lord to conſult with? So *David* having cut off the lap of *Sauls* garment, checked himſelfe, and ſmote his heart for it. As I ſaid, it is with a good heart, as with the ey-lid; which being given to cover the curious eye, is ſo tender, that if the leaſt mote touch the eye, it cannot endure it, but twinckles and complaines

Simil.

1 King.22.7.

1 Sam.24.5.

plaines inſtantly. Try thy ſelfe then by this rule: If thou feele Gods Commands with a furr'd glove on thy fingers, and as one would feele the leaſt needle with a cloath about his hand: if thou goe to worke groſſely with commands, it muſt be a very great and large one which thou feeleſt, but as for the leſſer, and narrower ones, thou haſt no ſenſe thereof, (as in truth an hypocrite cannot reach the ſpiritualneſſe of any Command) thou ſheweſt thy ſelfe what thou art: But if thou ſet the Commands of God in the cloſſet of thy ſoule, if thou haſt a tender, ſenſible feeling of all thy jars and cavills with the Commands of God, if thou ſtart at the leaſt appearance of evill, aſwell as thoſe evills which will waſte, and gull downe thy conſcience, its a marke of an heart truly cloſing with Commands. 2 Kings

Thirdly, its a very good ſigne of a cloſe heart, if having beene prevented once by the ſweet of a ſurfetting ſinne, the ſoule have enough and too much of it for ever after. If a tender ſtomacke have overſhot it ſelfe with exceſſe in ſome diſh of meat, commonly nature will doe penance all the life after, and loath that diſh. Seldome doe we read, that the Saints fell into the ſame ſinnes, which once they paid for. *David* returned no more to his uncleanneſſe, *Hezechia* to his pride of life, *Peter* to his denying of his Maſter. Try thy ſelfe then by this. If thou make a falling ſickneſſe of thy ſinnes, and art alway complaining, praying and diſgracing of a ſin, but yet falleſt into it againe as often, thy heart is either unſound, or unguarded: I grant that *Beelzebub* will light againe often upon the place which he is beaten from; but I ſpeake of a defiledneſſe of heart, conſenting to that which it ſeems much to whine and complaine of. For ſurely a good heart is alway in combat againſt any ſinne, but above all againſt her moſt knowne naturall corruptions, her eye is alway upon them, they make her as the fiſh out of her element, quaking for feare. No hectique diſpoſition upon the body ſo ſapes away the ſtrength thereof, as the feare of a ſinne formerly foiling the ſoule, makes it fearefull of it, yea it nouriſheth in it ſelfe a perpetuall antipathy, and enmity with it. Many may be her ſtaggers, but ſtill ſhe lies in watch and wait againſt them, and all the opportunities, occaſions and inducements unto them.

3. Triall. It profits in obedience by experience of former diſobeying.

Fourthly, an honeſt heart hath a ſenſible joy in it ſelfe, that there is a word of God to decide the queſtion between her and her ſinne: Be the colours of a baſe luſt never ſo ſtrong and many, yet the ſoule is glad to heare, that neither it ſelfe, nor yet her corruption muſt determine the caſe, but that the word muſt and can beare ſway. She ſaith in ſuch a caſe as *Saul* did in caſting lots betweene himſelfe and *Ionathan*: The Lord give a perfect lot. This is a ſigne that although the heart might poſſibly be blinded by ignorance in ſome caſe, yet ſincerity is ſtil alive, becauſe it can rejoice to hear the cauſe of God pleaded againſt her owne, and can finde in her heart to abandon the moſt pretious luſt, rather then the leaſt tittle of Gods commands ſhould periſh. He who hath an ill cauſe loves not to heare of an equall bearing by impartiall Arbitrators: But he whoſe cauſe is good, or at leaſt who loves peace, is more troubled with the controverſie, then tickled with the gaine; and therefore bindes himſelf to ſtand to award, and is glad that there is any way to make an end.

4. Triall. In caſes of queſtion ſhe is glad that the word may decide it.

1 Sam. 14.41.

Fifthly,

2 Kings

5. Triall. She prefers the ſafety of the Command before her owne ſkin.

Fifthly, the honeſt heart cares alway more for the preſervation of the integrity of Commands, then for her owne ſafety and ends. She is like herein to the harlot whoſe the child was, 1 King.3.end. The falſe mother hearing *Salomon* call for a ſword to divide the childe, looked onely at her owne ends, to be as the other woman was; but in the meane time ſhe diſcovered her owne unnaturalneſſe, and that the childe was none of her owne. But the true mother who knew the coſt and price of her child, could not endure the cutting of it aſunder, but cried, Give her rather the child, then it ſhould be ſlaine. Juſt ſo is it here: A baſe heart, never bred by the grace of the Spirit, to obey Commands, rejoices when it ſelfe, and the word may have ſhare, and ſhare like; is glad to ſee the word mangled, and that God ſhould have one peece of his will and ſhe another. But a cloſe ſoule obeying Commands, is of a farre other frame; for ſhe hath been bred of the immortall ſeed of the word, lien in the wombe, felt the warmth, and drawne the breaſts of it, and lives and growes by it: Therefore ſhee cannot endure to ſee it divided, wreſted, abuſed, and cut in two; rather ſhe is content to abhorre herſelfe, her owne ends and reſpects, and cries, O Lord, let not the childe be hurt, rather let my will bee caſt in the dirt. This is a ſad triall indeed; let us come to the ſcanning of it: While Gods and our ſtreame may be ſuffered to runne in one chanell, we eaſily give way to God: But, if it ſo fall out, that he will not ſuffer our dung to ſwimme with his Apples, but if we will goe in his ſtream, we muſt goe in it meerly, onely our luſts muſt bee renounced; nay, perhaps ſo the caſe ſtands, that even our lawfull liberties muſt be removed, our lives, healths, gifts, contents, eaſe, elbowroom, credit and ſway, muſt be ſhaken off, to obey a Command; and thoſe who would perſwade us (as *Peter* did Chriſt) to pitty our ſelves, muſt bee rated away and forſaken, wife, childe, friend, counſellor, people, Miniſter, who come in and tel us, if you ſuffer, and obey God, farewell the eaſe of our life, farewell the jollity of our towne, our ſhops, trades, takings, revenewes, credits, contents: Oh! I ſay, if in ſuch a caſe, the life of the childe, (the honour of the world and of conſcience) bee more pretious then all theſe, if then we flagge not with hopefull *Ioaſh*, when his Princes came to entice him; If then we ſtick to a Command, if then we cleave to a charge, this is a ſigne of ſoundneſſe indeed.

Mat.16.25.

2 Chr.34.17.

6. Triall.] Sixtly, if we cleave to Gods Commands, prove it by this marke; if we looke at a Command nakedly, and cavil not againſt it by the oppoſition of it to other commands, if we ſet not Gods Commands together by the ears, as *Saul* did, affirming that the killing of al, ſorted not with piety or charity; if we leave the conſequences of our obedience to God, without pleading againſt them by arguments from abſurdity, or inconvenience, its a ſigne of a cloſe heart: Our nature is, when wee ſee the ſad command to lie before us, to diſpute againſt it thus, What ſhall become of my people, if I obey this command, what ſhall become of the glory of God? But honeſt obedience takes no more thought for God, then he takes for himſelfe: if he commands us ought, he cals not at our hands for more then he allowes us; but takes that to his owne conſideration, and will have us let him alone with that. Wee

ſhall

2 Kings

ſhall not need take thought for the good which is loſt by our obeying: But we muſt not doe evill that good may come of it. To forecaſt the diſaſters which our obedience may inferre, is to take upon us the perſon both of the Subject and of the King: if the King call for obedience, let the inconvenience upon it lye upon him: wee have done our duty. Try we our ſelves then about this, if we bee negotious and curious for God, in a thing wherein wee are not called, its thankleſſe double diligence: As we ſee *Vzza* in ſtaying the Arke was more provident for God then hee required: and therefore paid dearly for it, though his intent was good. So, when we judge of obedience, not by ſucceſſe, but by the word. It was God his will that the Arke ſhould be brought home by *Saul*, though he ſlew the men of Bethſhemeſh for looking into it. See 1 *Chron.* 12.

Note well.

2 Sam. 6. 6.

Seventhly, he obeyes cloſely, who onely truſts God, and licks himſelfe whole upon him for any loſſe which he ſuſtaines, either for doing his will, or for ſuffering for it. An hypocrite upbraids God, as for his doings, *Eſa.* 58. 6. ſo for his ſufferings, *Matth.* 25. 24. Hee thinkes God to be bound and beholden to him for them: and if hee either regard him not in the one, or reward him not for the other, hee thinkes himſelfe wronged. Contrarily, a cloſe obeyer counts his reward to ſtand in his obedience, that God will account him worthy, either to doe or ſuffer for him. And if he loſe either his will and baſe luſts by the one, or his credit, health, wealth, or friends by the other, he lookes at the promiſe of an hundred fold, grounded upon Gods all-ſufficiency and faithfulneſſe. A notable text we have 2 *Chron.* 25. 9. when the Prophet forbad *Amaziah* to goe fight with his enemies: his objection was, That he had hired Souldiers of Iſrael for ſome thouſands of Talents: how ſhould he doe for thoſe? The Prophet tells him, The Lord could abundantly reſtore thoſe Talents.

7. Triall. It truſts God to make good all the loſes.

Acts 4. 22, 23.

Brethren, we would ſuffer perhaps for God: but then (as it was with *Amaziah*) theſe Talents are the ſorrow of all: hence comes our unwillingneſſe to ſuffer. But as the Prophet ſaid, ſo ſay I, The Lord can make them good: doe but truſt him. Affliction is a bitter herbe; but it beares a ſweet flower, and ſweeter fruit. Give the Lord thy Talents, and thou ſhalt have an hundred fold backe againe. Theſe loſſes which thou feareſt, thy wife, thy children, thy contents, give them up to God, truſt him with them, and he will refine them all for thee, that thou ſhalt receive them at his hands purer and cleaner, (not to ſay greater and fuller) then ever before. Thoſe vapours which the Sunne exhales from the earth, loſe nothing by it, for they are ſo altered in the ayre, that they come downe againe more fruitfull upon the earth, then ever. So, if God have once tryed thee in this furnace, all ſhall come forth purer then ever. The daughters of affliction are the faireſt of all other. There were no ſuch women for beauty as *Iobs* three daughters were after his affliction. He himſelfe was purer, and ſo was all he had: and as affliction is a furnace, ſo is it a banque: *Iob* had twice as much after he had loſt all, as before: No trade ſo gainfull as this of the Croſſe: a man that hath had the experience of it, gaines twice ſo much, nay an hundred times more then he had before: I ſay not temporally, (and

Job ult.

2 Kings

yet God is alsufficient) but spiritually, to all that suffer meekly and patiently. Cast off therefore the clog of these Talents both from thy heart and thy heeles, which do so hang on, and oppresse, and trust God, and he shall make them good.

Let us try our selves in this case: Put case we deny our selves in our passions and distempers of wife, servants in the family, when we bee provoked: surely we thinke our selves to lose our owne will, and the satisfying of our lusts, which is as our life: what shall we have for it? Surely the peace of God, passing all understanding shall rule our hearts: we shall be more then conquerours, and the sweetnesse of the love of Christ (for whose cause we doe deny our selves) shall bee sufficient boot in beame to pacifie us: wee would not forsake our fatnesse and sweetnesse for an humour, to exalt our selves; rather wee would deny our selves, to keepe that precious pearle unstained. Can wee then rest in this pay? Do we chuse rather to picke out the mystery of this hundred fold, and to improve it by faith, then wee will forfeit our obedience? Do we chuse rather to maintaine our liberty with God in communion, in prayer, in a quiet conscience, then we would breake a command? Would wee endure the greatest evill of punishment, rather then be guilty of the least knowne evill? It is a good signe. So I say also in our sufferings; perhaps we see our selves slighted and disregarded by men for our service to God; yea, those who awe us most, doe unthankfully (if not trecherously) handle us; our labour seemes to bee lost, and we are left to sinke in our owne charges. Can we now in this case commit our selves freely to the promise of God, and say, Though there be neither calfe left in the stall, nor bullocke in the flocke, yet we will still rejoyce in God our salvation? When the wife in the bosome is not to bee trusted (as *Micah* speakes) when a guide, a friend, prove unfaithfull, and our enemy is one, of our owne Tribe, familiarity, household? Can wee then trust in God, and make him our strength? Can we finde sap and savour in a promise of Gods support, whether he seeme to answer our prayers or not, yea, though in stead of releeving us, he adde sorrow to sorrow, and give our enemies the better of us? Can we make songs of him in our pilgrimage, and finde a realnesse in his promises, when nothing appeares, save that God leaves us, to sinke under our burdens? Surely it may appeare then, that our hearts are close in our obedience.

Phil.4.

Judg.9.

Hab.3.

Mica 7.5.

8. Triall. It closes with commands, without colours or evils.

Eighthly, if wee close with both the substance, and the extent of commands, without colours or cavils against either. The guise of this world of hypocrites, is contrary: For the former, when the question is, touching the substance of reading, hearing, prayer, Sacrament, wee colour over our unwillingnesse with some by-cavils. Being urged to read good bookes, they cavill and say, They are too deep and too learned for our understandings, as if wee would read them if they were plaine: whereas the bookes are plaine enough, but wee have no heart. Being urged to heare a good Preacher, wee alledge, wee conceive not his method. If we be bidden to frequent such a good Congregation, we say, we cannot endure to bee so crowded and thronged. If to follow such examples, we answer, they are too eminent for us to follow: whereas

whereas indeed, as once one anſwered, when he was urged to doe ſome good with his great wealth; The thing you urge is good, but I have no heart to it: ſo, we want an heart. So, when wee are called to ſerve God in our time, to faſt and pray, we cavill, That it is dangerous; and therfore we crave pardon: whereas the Lord calls us to ſerve him with all our ſtrength and courage, not onely in ſafe and eaſie duties, but even in ſuch as hypocrites count dangerous and offenſive. Try we our ſelves then by this Rule. If we profeſſe to ſerve and obey God even in thoſe duties for which the world loves not, with *Paul* we be not aſhamed to make them the beſt and faireſt flower of our garlands, it is a ſigne of cloſeneſſe and honeſty. See Acts 23. I ſay, if wee bee willing to bend our ſelves to our uttermoſt wiſedome and ability to obey, rather then through feare to give God the ſlip, it ſpeakes well for us. That which the world counts evill, I am not aſhamed to ſay, I worſhip God by.

Ninthly, if in ſuch Commands of God, as border (and that lawfully) upon our owne content and welfare, yet wee reſt not in that obedience, but can prove that wee are carried upon better reſpects. For example, it is Gods Command that we follow our Callings, That we puniſh ſin when we can, whereſoever it lies. Now marke: Wee feele our ſelves prompt enough (perhaps) to follow our work and buſineſſe, becauſe it runnes in the ſtreame of our commodity, and therefore wee will not be idle: So againe, it falles out, that hee whom we purſue for his offences, is our enemy; and therefore we are eaſily drawne to purſue him. Here therefore the triall is, if we can by evident Arguments prove, that as wee are not drawne to leave the duty for the neighbourhood to our owne ends: ſo yet we doe the duty from a ſuperiour principle of Conſcience. As for example; though we ſhould get nothing by our preaching, yet wee would chuſe to preach rather then deſiſt. And, as we purſue our enemy, ſo would wee alſo our friend, if he ſinned in like caſe. This is a good marke. For why? hypocrites are very glad when Gods and their ends concurre: As the dung ſwimming in the ſame ſtreame with the Apples, ſaid, We Apples ſwimme. But when wee can ſeparate the pretious from the vile, and call dung dung; and Apples Apples, it is well. Saint *Auguſtine* ſayd well, God bids me preach; but I feele my ſelfe to pleaſe mine owne humour in it: God wills me to ſhine; and lo, I feele that I ſhine to my ſelfe: Therefore, as I will not ceaſe ſhining for this reaſon, ſo yet I will endeavour ſo to ſhine to others in holy life, that I may not therewith ſhine to my ſelfe by pride.

9. Triall. In the obedience to pleaſing Commands, it looks at God, not eaſe.

Tenthly, cloſe obedience growes: It is as cloſe and punctuall in old age, as in youth, and more, at leaſt for mettall and ſubſtance. It is ſaid of one of the Kings of Juda, that when hee was old, hee put his confidence in the Phyſitians, as if hee had not done ſo in his younger yeares; but cloſed more with the promiſe. There is a ſeed of Revolt in our baſe ſpirits, appearing more in our age, then in younger yeares. It is not noted in vaine of that old Prophet of Bethel, that hee ſent for the young Propht to eate with him, contrary to the charge of God. This then is ſome triall, if in our age wee wax not more confi-

10. Triall. It groweth with age. 2 Chro. 16. 12.

1 King 13. 9. 10.

2 Kings

dent of our ſtrength, more looſe in our zeale, ſlacker in good example, remiſſe in our watch, and bolder to trench upon thoſe Commands of God, which formerly wee durſt not tranſgreſſe. If with our yeares, knowledge, experience, we grow more cloſe, carefull, wary and punctuall with God, rather then otherwiſe, it is a ſweet ſigne. Age is proud of it ſelfe, and gives large diſpenſations: And, it were to bee wiſhed, that our lamentable experience of all ſorts, did not too much approve it.

11. Triall. It ſtops the diſobedience of others.

Eleventhly, a true loyall heart rather ſtrives to make up the breach of other mens rebellions, then dares venture to break the leaſt Command it ſelfe. It hath abundance of mourning that others diſobey God, and that God is not generally obeyed rather then want of honeſty and will to obey it ſelfe. In 1 Chron. 12. the Text telles us, that *David* fetcht home the Arke, as in other reſpects of duty to God; ſo in reſpect alſo of *Sauls* neglect, who had not done it all his time. And *Ioſias* is ſaid to pull downe all thoſe Groves, Images, Idol-worſhips and Reliques of old evils, which all his Predeceſſors had let alone: Try we our ſelves then, by this, Whether our ſtreame doe run ſo naturally to God, that for the love and honour which we owe him, we content not our ſelves with obeying him our ſelves, except (as farre as we can) we fetch in others to doe his will; at leaſt, that we have a large heart, to wiſh that it may bee done in earth as in heaven, mourning for the narrow bounds of obedience, both our owne and others, and making amends for the defects of others, to our uttermoſt. This is a good ſigne.

2 Chro. 34.4.

Matth. 6.10.

12. Triall. It obeyes when there appeares no advantage for our obedience.

Twelfthly, if we then obey Gods Commands, when as yet wee are not like to enjoy any temporall fruit of our obeying; ſo that, come of it what will, we will cleave to obedience for obedience ſake. Thus it is ſaid of *Ioſiah*, that he ſent to *Hulda* for counſell what to doe, when he had read the booke of the curſes of the Law, and ſtood convinced thereof. When ſhee ſent him word, that God had decreed to bring miſery upon the City and Nation (although hee for his part ſhould eſcape the ſight thereof) what did hee? Give over the obedience of the Command? No: when hee fore-ſaw hee ſhould not, nor could prevaile for the whole land; yet, for meere conſcience ſake, hee humbled himſelfe more before God, then ever any before him had done. If then in deſolate times, wee can finde in our hearts to humble our ſoules to God, whether the ſucceſſe anſwer the expectation or not, and give our ſervice to God, to requite it as he ſhall pleaſe, it is a good ſigne that love to him prevailes againſt ſelfe-love in our obeying.

2 Chro. 34.10.

13. Triall. Three branches.

Againe, true and cloſe obedience is active and lively, that is, both living by the fruit of experience, as alſo watching all occaſions and opportunities in ſpeciall to obey, with reviving her ſelfe, and renewing her Covenant, zeale and ſpirit daily, to obey better.

1. Branch. It is bettered by experience.

For the former of theſe Branches: Firſt, it is experimentall; that is, whereas the obedience of an hypocrite is a dead thing, theirs is lively. An hypocrite followes meanes and duties apace; but is never the better for them, becauſe he wants the life of grace to draw acceptance and bleſſing from God. He layes heaps upon heaps, yet dies of thirſt.

2 Kings

thirſt. As *Iob* ſpeakes of the Eſtridge, that ſhee layes her egges, and hides them in the ſand; becauſe God hath denyed her wiſedome to brood them: and ſo the feet of beaſts cruſh them in peeces: So, the Lord hath denied wiſedome to the hypocrite, hee ſuffers him to toyle himſelfe, and take paines to worſhip God, and doe duties; but he is as willing to forfeit them again: comfort & ſavour he wants, he is as new to begin againe after them, as before; only from hand to mouth, he pleaſes himſelf in his obeying. But the cloſe heart ſo obeyes, that he feels peace thereby, enjoyes his obedience, feels the ſweet fruit of it to encourage him, the experience of it to ripen him, to ſtrenghthen him, to better his reſolutions and purpoſes in obeying for afterward, that he may with cloſer conſent of heart obey for time to come. And withall, being accepted in Chriſt, & having all his obedience dipped in his blood, he is cheerfull, lively, and joyfull in his attempts, growing by the experience both of his failings, to make him humbler and wiſer; and of his vertues to make his obedience more ſetled, rooted, and fruitfull, claiming (in an holy manner) his priviledge from God. So alſo, it is occaſionall: An hypocrite will heare and praiſe the cloſeſt and moſt ſpirituall Sermon of obedience: ſay what you will of a cloſe Sabbath, compaſſion to the afflicted, he yeelds to it: but in particular, and upon occaſion, he is no body. When hee feares death, none will make better covenants to obey cloſely then hee. But let him be up again and healthy, he apprehends no occaſions, his ſilver then is droſſe. As Eccleſiaſtes ſaith, The heart of the wiſe man is on his right hand, but the fooles on the left. Each hypocrite in his pangs and hot blood is very fervent in obeying. So *Iehu* marched fervently againſt *Iehorams*, while the heat of ſelfe-love laſted, but the motion ſoone quailed. For when the heat was over, the next we heare of him is, that he departed not from all the ſinnes of *Ieroboam*. He rooted out *Iezabels* idols, but ſet up *Ieroboams*. Sure it is, the obedience of hypocrites is dead ware: there is no active principle in it to quicken it, by each occaſion offered to expreſſe it ſelfe: or by each defect and decay to recover it ſelfe. That it is, it is by ſtarts and pangs, whereas the obedience of a cloſe heart, hath a principle alway maintaining it in life, vigour, cheerfulneſſe, integrity, uprightneſſe and unweariedneſſe. Try we our ſelves alſo by this marke.

Job.39.14.

Eccleſ.2.26.

Acts 11.34.

2. Branch. It is occaſionall.

Compare Jer. 42.4. with cap.44.16.

2 King.9.34.

3. Branch. It is lively from a principle.

True and cloſe obedience lies cloſe to God as well in particular duties of our places and callings, as in the generall courſe of Religion. You ſhall have many Magiſtrates, who as private Chriſtians, walke religiouſly; but in the acts of their Magiſtracie, bite in their zeale: ſo Miniſters, Parents, Governours of Families. A Chriſtian is never ſearcht to the quicke, till the tryall lye in his particular place. It is not enough not to be a rotten and hollow Magiſtrate, except thou alſo bee a faithfull one. A rotten one will diſcover himſelfe by his treachery, & ſiding with thoſe ſins & ſinners he ſhould puniſh, under one pretext or other, declining the zealous purſuit of them: But one that is not faithfull, will withdraw himſelfe for feare, as loth to be noted, afraid of his betters, willing to ſleep in a whole skin. Try our ſelves by this: If wee obey cloſely, wee will not ſtrive to quench, but to quicken up our

14. Triall. It obeyes as well in ſpeciall duties of our calling, as in generall of Religion.

2 Kings

ſelves, to pick out the beſt ſervices we can for God in our places. As a good Juſtice will ſtraine his authority, and improve the Statute to the uttermoſt againſt Sabbath-breakers, drunkards, and glad that hee can thus expreſſe his heart: Another will bite it in and conceale himſelfe. So Parents, ſo Officers, ſo rich ones, doe that which others cannot, elſe, alas! what ſingular thing doe you?

15. Triall. It is well principled.

To conclude, an honeſt heart will not weare the Divels Irons, nor bee diſpenſed with: ſhee hath a ſound principle, and is not like to hypocrites. I may compare theſe to Children ſet to Schoole, ſome onely to read, write, and caſt account, ſo farre onely as will ſerve them to keep their Shop-booke, or make their reckonings ſtraight: Others to be Grammarians, and ſo Univerſity Scholers, to learne the Arts and Tongues, that afterward their learning may principle and furniſh them for all ſtudies. So is it with theſe: The formall Profeſſor, if he can pray, and tip his tongue with generall religion, is at a point, and lookes no further; hee hath enough for the attaining of his owne ends, and is never troubled about his courſe. But the ſound hearted Chriſtian, who ſtrives to bring his whole heart and life under the Rule, hath never done with himſelfe; but workes his generall principles into an infinite bredth of particulars: How ſhall I delight in the Sabbath? How ſhall I hold in my heart from giddineſſe and looſneſſe? How ſhall I watch to God in my thoughts, affections and conſcience? How ſhall I get ſtrength againſt this ſecret luſt, and that defect in duty, praying, hearing? How ſhall I uſe the world, as if not? or deny my ſelfe? God ſees theſe errours, although man doth not. Oh! the principle of grace exceeds the ſhifting skill of an hypocrite, as much as heaven doth earth.

Theſe are ſome (among many others) which may ſerve to try our hearts (brethren) about this waighty buſineſſe. Set we upon this work therefore, and ceaſe not till by all or by ſome of theſe trials, thou canſt (although but weakly, yet ſoundly) judge thy ſelfe to be one that endeavours cloſely to obey. And as thou ſhalt by theſe markes diſcover thy ſelfe to be, ſo either bee comforted, or admoniſhed. To the which ends the two uſes following ſhall pertaine. Thus much for the uſe of Examination.

Vſe 4. Comfort.

Fourthly, then let all ſuch as can prove that they receive the word of Commands according thereto, with all cloſeneſſe and faithfulneſſe, comfort themſelves in their condition. I have preſſed the uſe (in part) before, to wit, in one of the Reaſons. To apply my ſelfe more particularly, this I adde, That thou who cloſeſt with Gods Commands, maiſt be doubly encouraged. Firſt in reſpect of thy ſpeciall ſerving of thy time: Thou beareſt witneſſe to God, and to his truths, when thou ſeeſt the power of godlineſſe borne downe in this baſe world: know it that as the Lord will be ſlight with the ſlight, ſo, he will bee cloſe with the cloſe: It is his promiſe, That who honour him, he will honour, thoſe that eſteeme preciouſly of Commands, and walke narrowly with him in their obedience, he will eſteem preciouſly of them, they ſhall be of his Cabinet counſell, they ſhall be privy to his ſecrets, he will make knowne to them his waies: So that when he is aloofe to others, they

In a reſpects. The firſt.

1 Sam. 3.

Joh. 7. 17.

they ſhall have familiar acceſſe, yea if he give an account to any, of his adminiſtrations, they ſhall be ſure to underſtand it. *Abraham* was for no other cauſe, called the friend of God: If ye doe my will, you ſhall be my friends, more then my ſervants; for friends know ſecrets. Read that Ezek 9. Where the Lord cauſes them that obeyed him but in one of his charges (to mourne for the iniquity of the age) to be marked with a penne and inke, that he might know them for his jewells, for his beloved ones. And againe he tells that Church in Rev. 3. 19. becauſe ſhe had kept the word of his patience, that is, clave to his truths in the times of danger: Therefore he would ſave her from the temptation which ſhould come upon the whole earth: They that ſtand out for God, and will not oppoſe his glory to publicke ſale and reproach, hee will ſhrowd them in the day of trouble, when others ſhall goe from chamber to chamber with terror to cover their heads from wrath. A ſtrange promiſe, which we can hardly ſee how God ſhould performe; but yet God will doe it for ſuch as preſerve themſelves unſpotted in conſcience, and cleane from the infection of others. In the meane time he will be found of them in their prayers; cloſe walkers with God, ſhall have cloſe audience, cloſe peace, cloſe comfort, inward refreſhings, as Eſay cap. 50. ſpeakes, read the 10. verſ. Who is he that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth his voice? Let him ſtay himſelf upon his God: And therefore fearing God, feare nothing elſe: Although thou be ſcorned and purſued for this thy cloſeneſſe, as a vile perſon, yet, let not this diſmay thee, for thou ſuffereſt for God, and (as Saint *Peter* ſaith) if for a good cauſe, and cleaving to a word, thou art faine to ſuffer, take no thought in that behalfe; let them who ſuffer for their miſdeeds looke about them, but as for thy part, the Spirit of glory reſts upon thee, and although thy face ſhine not as an Angells (like *Stephens*) yet thou ſhalt as much convince thine enemies, as hee did; the ſame Spirit of courage and patience which upheld him, ſhall ſuſtaine thee, till thou be redeemed fully from all adverſity. Beare a while, and he that commeth will come & not tarry: in the meane time, ſide not with them who breake Commands, and would have thee follow their examples: But rather if this be to be vile, be thou yet more vile, and the more thou avileſt thy ſelfe for God, the more honourable he ſhall eſteeme thee.

Gen. 18. 17. 18.

Cloſe obeyers of God in looſe times, ſhall have cloſe comfort in trouble.

1 Pet. 3. 14.

Act. 6. ult.

Heb. 10. 37.

The like I may ſay of thy obeying commands in the generall practice of Chriſtianity: take comfort in this alſo. Canſt thou ſay, that thou delighteſt in the law of God in thy ſpirit and inner man? I tell thee, thy eſtate is better then to be a Prince, without it. The Lord hath done great things for thee (if it be thus) and (as *Paul* ſpeakes) even made thee for the very nonce. Conſider the dayes paſt! Hath it alway beene thus with thee? Couldeſt thou alway deſire to be unclothed, and clothed upon? Couldeſt thou alway deſire to dye daily, through the rejoycing in our Lord Jeſus? Was thy ſoule alway under the authority of the commands both of Law and Goſpell, with ſweetneſſe and delight? Was it not rather bitterneſſe and gall? Who then hath made his yoake eaſie? Surely hee who deſerves unſpeakable thankes at thy hands for it! And therefore bee alſo truly joyfull in

The ſecond Branch. Rom. 7. 22.

2 Cor. 5.

2 Kings

Delight in obeying the ſad commands of God, affords ſolid comfort.

in thy portion! The time was when ſuch a liberty of going in and out with the Lord, would have made thee leape: and ſhalt thou now carry it about thee, without ſavour or ſenſibleneſſe? Perhaps thou wilt ſay, I have my load another way, a deale of baſe corruption hanging upon me, to coole my courage! Oh! but the Lord hath onely tryed thee thereby, whether thou wilt forſake his yoke or no, for thine owne eaſe: he doth but put a back-bias upon thee, that he might weigh thy motion to himſelfe; thou art not hereby hurt one whit, but much bettered, kept in awe, and humbleneſſe before God: whereas elſe thou wouldſt be puffed up! But, is this, or ought this to be any cauſe of thy diſcontent? ought it not rather to encreaſe thy comfort, when thou ſeeſt the Lord hath provided againſt the vaniſhing of it, to make it durable? Oh! beſtow but a few houres in a weeke, to thinke what a priviledge it is for duſt and aſhes, nay a dunghill of rebellion, a depth of treachery, to be ſo changed, as to come under the line of God, and to be under his authority, with a willing heart, to make the love of Chriſt thy banner, and to bee ſubject to God thine heaven! Oh! to have thy will captived to his, and to deſire to know, feare, love, cloſe with, nothing ſave his will, what is it but the ſuburbs of heaven? to feele a veine of ſweetneſſe to overrule thy ſoule, and to cure that light, giddy and frothy emptineſſe of it, to ſadden and ſettle it under this power and kingdome of the Command! To caſt out the law of the members, the law of a proud, a ſtout ſelf-loving and ſelf-ſeeking heart; to bee above theſe, above corruption, ſo that as they ſtincke in thy noſtrills, ſo ſhouldeſt thou in theirs: Oh doe not count this a common priviledge, rather nouriſh it, hugge it in thy boſome, beware leſt any ſteale away thy Crowne! And rather then thou ſhouldeſt live to ſee that day, wherein the commands of Faith and Love ſhould wax ſtale, and unſavoury, chuſe to be taken out of this world, that thine eyes may never ſee the evill of a revolting heart, to depart away from the living God.

Heb. 3. 12.

Vſe 5.
Admonition. Lets of cloſe walking with God muſt be abhorred.

Fifthly, if we feele by due examining, that our hearts warpe from Gods Commands, then let us be admoniſhed to amend it betimes, and to ſearch and caſt out all ſuch lets as do hinder and foreſtall in us this cloſing with God. As it fares with hypocrites (of whom I have ſpake) that they have an habituall contrariety: ſo it often falls out with the people of God, that they meet with many actuall rubbes which oppoſe this ſubjection of ſpirit. Not onely that old *Adam*, which is ever preſent, (and when they would doe good) ſtill ſuggeſts evill, and when they would ſhake off evill, ſtill hinders good, as Rom. 7. 14. But alſo, they meet with one or other actuall affront, in whatſoever command the Lord tenders unto them, which dogges and diſquiets them from the entry upon the worke, to the upſhot thereof. There bee as many ſubtilties of heart, or ſtops of incumbrance, as there are commands, one tricke or other ſtill is put upon us. If the command be to bee unſpotted of the world, then the Divell comes in with the neceſſity of following my calling, of cloſe attending our worke and trades, he tells us the world is hard, and he that labours not muſt not looke for meat, we muſt have no more then we toile for, we muſt therefore do as others doe, and ſell as the market, wee muſt make the moſt of our com-

What they are. 1. Let,

commodities, and ſpare for a hard time: (and yet perhaps we be rich, have not a childe or kinſman to beſtow it on) and ſo under this cloake, breakes in abundance of worldlineſſe, not only to keep us from unſpottedneſſe, but even to drowne us in the world. So let the Lord but preſſe us to ſuffer for a truth, rather then betray it, perhaps we anſwer we would faine doe it, but then throng in ſuch a number of feares, how ſhall we endure perſecution? How ſhall we beare reproach? Inſulting of enemies, impriſoment, threats, fines, hard handlings? How ſhall I beare the loſſe of my gifts, credit, favour of the world, company, contents? How ſhall wife, children be maintained, family and charges ſupported, defraied in this unthankfull world? Thus while the meer outſide of things is looked at, the croſſe is terrible, all ſuffering is tedious: and thus is it in all other commands, carnall reaſon, eaſe, remiſſeneſſe and ſlacknes of ſpirit, vanity, infidelity, and ſuch other ſcurfe breaks in: and then comes in a marveilous wearineſſe of reſiſtance of our lets, and ſo a willingneſſe to be foiled, to give up our weapons, and to reſiſt no more, as if we deſpaired ſecretly (in our baſe ſpirits) of ever recovering, and therefore muſt give our ſelves ſome intermiſſion and eaſe. Sutable hereto, is a third let, when we think our ſtrength not yet growne to ſuch maturity as to digeſt ſo ſtrong, and beare ſo weighty commands as Gods puts upon us, and ſo aſſume (the whiles) a kinde of exemption and liberty to our ſelves for the preſent. So alſo when we nouriſh not the Promiſe with the Command (without the which, who doubts but it is burthenſome?) But are carried by the preſent ſenſe of our ſpirit, how that welcomes or diſtaſtes it, and goe no further, and ſo marre the worke by ill handling. Otherwhiles defiling and abuſing our ſelves by ſome truths, which ſerve us not to hatch us up to laſineſſe and eaſe, but to encourage us in weakeneſſe: As that God paſſes by the tranſgreſſions of his people: our perfection here, is the ſight of our infirmities: No perfection is here to bee looked for: Againe, looking at the common guiſe of the world, their formall looſe religion, and yet how they carry it out, God ſuffering them, and men admiring them: or at leaſt, looking at the looſer ſort of Chriſtians, what largeneſſe and breadth they allow themſelves.

2. Let.

3 Let.

4. Let.

5. Let.

6. Let.

Sometimes alſo by ill cuſtome in leſſer evils, not eſpying how the heart waxes degenerate and unſavoury, loſing ground of cloſe obedience daily. And this is not the leaſt let of all, that men will not give themſelves leaſure of thoughts, to meditate, and ſo to equal their hearts to the ſadneſſe and cloſeneſſe of Gods Commands: but goe on in their courſe, and run their round, (as blinde *Sampſon* in his mill) not conſidering what waſh way they make of Gods Commands. Oh! theſe and all other ſcurfe of this kinde, as Antinomian liberty under the Goſpell, erroneous thinking our obedience to be cloſer then it is, becauſe in ſome duties (which pleaſe us) we are cloſe: whereas in others wee are looſe: as, when God requires us whether alone, to be alway well ſeaſoned, and leaſt alone: or if with others, to curbe our vanity and vagaries, and either to doe good or take it: I ſay, Theſe (for it were infinite to ſay all) the Lord will have us cut off by the ſame ſword of his Spirit, even by his Commands: alway watching a baſe heart, alway armed

7. Let.

8. Let.

2 Kings

armed against Devill and world, her threats or her baites: and when they have gain'd God all they can, yet to conclude for God, and to determine and resolve all our resistances and demurres, by his bare truth: saying, All these have their colours: but against them all is one truth, one eternall, righteous, unchangeable word of God, which must carry them all, and my soule downe the streame.

Rom.4.18.19. Be warned then (brethren) by this caveat: Doe as the Saints have done before us: *Abraham* had a world of exceptions to snare him: he foresaw that the killing of *Isaac* implyed not onely a contradiction to the promise, but also infinite many absurdities, as to breake a morall law, to make himselfe a man execrable, an abhorred person: therefore forbidding his thoughts to plod any longer, hee drownes all in the command: God (saith he) who gave him, requires him: why should I then deny him? Absurd, contrary, impossible charges to flesh, imply, that God will ayd the soule of the obeyer, with the more singular grace, and crowne it with greater rewards: and therefore hee resolves Gen.39.8. to goe downeright with the command. *Ioseph* had his thoughts (no doubt) stirring, when he was tempted by his lewd mistresse; perhaps, if I doe it, honour, gaine, preferment, may ensue? But to be sure, on the Prov.6.26. other side it will be most wofull for me to fall into the pit of an whore, to be snared for ever with a cursed conscience: oh (saith he) shall I doe this, and sinne against God? Here (beloved) lyes the maine triall of a Christian, if, when all is said that can be, against the charge either of believing or obeying, the soule shall devoure all her objections, as *Peter* (when after his idle fishing all the night, hee was bidden to cast Luke 5.7. his net on the right side of the ship) Lord, at thy command I will cast in. So doe thou and prosper. And so much also may serve for this use of Admonition.

Vse 6. Reproofe. Now I conclude with two other uses, of Reproofe, and Exhortation. For the former thus: Are Gods charges so close, so spirituall, so binding? Surely then the course of this world is very blame-worthy, for that loves nothing save liberty and dispensations. It was wont to be said in the times of those heretiques, All the world is become Arrian: but now we may say, It is all turned libertine Antinomists and Libertines, (who under the colour of ascribing to the excellency and extent of faith and imputation, (which they never well understood) maintaine a licentiousnesse of practice) have filled the world, at this day. The course of such among us as have written or preached some abatements to our former Tenets and Articles of Doctrine, allaying and corrupting our principles of justification, free grace, and other the like, hath brought forth this bastard fruit, and Papists dare publiquely write books in the reconciling of our Doctrine in this Church of England with their owne Tenets. And as some Separatists from the writings of some of our Worthies, have falsely extracted a necessity of our departing from the Church of England: so would these impudent *Cassanders* force us to come in and joyne our selves with their Popish Synagogue? What true and Christian spirit should not mourne to see our old pure wine thus to be mixed with water, and our old coin so embased with copper? For practice, much more apparant it is, how men make

make dispensations for liberty, in all the chiefe points of Christianity? What one act or duty favouring of sincerity or the power of Christ, is not catcht at, curtolled, diminished, and dispensed with? When were the lascivious wits of men more busied, or their prophane hearts more bold, in fleecing away the extents of the truths of God, as they are in Jesus? And why? Surely, because whensoever power of truth decayes, there the tenets of truth must also be limited, restrained, and circumscribed. Yea, and men would seeme to be mad with reason, and to maintaine, That those former times wherein Doctrines and Practices of men were more close and strict, were times of lesse light and judgement: but now (say they) we are growne to be more skilfull and able to discerne, and therefore may take more liberty. Who ever heard that ignorance bred closenesse, or that light bred liberty? True it is, that as truth, so the power of truth lies low in the earth, and is hidden deep, and requires a long time to dig it out. But to affirme that the truth was more strict in the beginning of time, then after; and that it is the honour of time to broach liberty & loosnesse; how unreasonable it is? No, rather we have by our base deserting of truth, or detaining the same in unrighteousnesse, brought upon our selves a revolt from both truth and the power thereof in great measure, and made our ends worse then our beginnings; except the Lord mercifully doe set our Sunne ten degrees back, and reduce us againe to our first temper. Let us not think those dayes which God honoured with so much blood of our Martyrs, (and that in the infancy of our Church) were further off the power and savour of godlinesse, then we are. Rather it might become us even now (in our Laodicean self-sufficiency) to learn of them, and not to pretend our own liberty and bredth, as an argument of greater perfection.

Dispensations against the power of truths, is a great sinne of our times.

Sundry instances named.

The truth of it is, looke wee into all estates and conditions of life, great, small, or middle; into all actions, behaviours of men, morall, spirituall: into all their wayes, either of worship and ordinances, or of life and conversation, and wee shall finde not one of these to have escaped the taint of carnall liberty and dispensations. Our fore-fathers zeale could outbid all feares, persecutions and dangers, for the maintenance of commands. But we (degenerate creatures) are all for abatements, and how we may reconcile Gods and our owne ends together. If men could refine the Bible, and make an *Index Expurgatorius*, for the dashing out of the most close, powerfull Truths, as too hot and heavie for the times of loosnesse, wherein we live, how welcome would they be? As Papists have done with the second Command, and with other writings of men, which favour not their proceedings: so doe we: now goe about by our practice, to traduce those grounds of Religion formerly received, and call them into question. Who is he, that seeing our Sabbath prophanations, our pride in apparell, our garish fashions, disguised cuts of haire and attires, both in men and women, the height at which the most live, how the Peasant affects the habit of a Yeoman, hee, of a Gentleman, hee, of a Knight, hee, of a Lord, and so forth, would not say, The whole world runnes riot, and is mad of liberty? Who can endure a Minister, who (like *Micaja*) will

Amplification of this reproof.

2 Kings

will ſpeake nothing for feare, or flattery, but the naked truth? How are Gods commands in ſhort time, like to bee turned into mens carnall diſpenſations? So that, their looke and habit will ſcarce bee diſcerned.

1 King. 22.16.

Marks of diſpenſers.

Some branches of reproofe, 1. Number.

1 King. 22.

1 King. 18.22.

And this may appeare by theſe particulars: Firſt, compare but the number of cloſers with Gods Commands, with the multitude of diſpenſers, and we ſhall ſee in Scripture, how many falſe Prophets *Ahab* had to one *Micaja*, how many *Baals* Prieſts *Iezabel* had to one *Elija*, how many thouſands of ſtaggering Iſraelites to one *Ioſua*: Eleven Tribes, Exod. 32. fell to ſet up the golden Calfe, to one Tribe of *Levi*, which deteſted it. And the like proportion was in our Saviour and his eleven Apoſtles, and a few others, to the ſwarme of Phariſees and diſpenſing hypocrites. Secondly, what cunning doe ſuch as are looſe in obeying Gods commands, uſe, to hooke in them that are better minded, to ſort and ſide with them; and how happy doe they think themſelves, if they can make to themſelves one Proſelyte? How eager was *Ahabs* meſſenger to ſeduce poore *Micaja*? And how ſafe are they when they can pervert ſuch? When *Boner* could draw in ſome of the weaker ſort to the perſecuted Chriſtians, to ſide and league with him againſt their brethren, what a May-game was it? Therefore *Salomon* wiſhes us to put our knife to our throat, and not to venture upon the dainties: for they have a hooke underneath. And how eager are ſuch people as doe themſelves breake the Lords day reſt, againſt them who dance not after their pipe? How greedily doe they ſnatch any occaſion which they can finde, from the errours of the better ſort, for the eſtabliſhing of their owne? Yea, and that from thoſe, whom (otherwiſe) they hate and abhorre? Mr. *Beza* and Mr. *Calvin* are men whom many doe not allow in all things; yet how doe they magnifie their opinion about the unmoralneſſe of the Sabbath? And thus doe they delight to diſ-joynt the good, that in their diviſions they may reigne. If they can picke out any who have learnedly written about games and paſtimes, Cards or Dice, how doe they applaud ſuch, and ſcorne the learning of ſuch who are otherwiſe minded? As the Fox, whoſe taile was cut off, was glad to have all other beaſts to cut off theirs. Thirdly, their counſell is ſutable. Oh! ſay they, yee ſhall doe well to moderate your zeale and ſeverity, to bee more calme and temperate: It were not your wiſedome to goe ſo faſt on, but yee may know how to come backe with ſafety. It is good policie for every man to ſecure his own Retreat. When young and hot blood is ſpent, you will bee wiſer; and when you have ſeene more into the world, you will bee cooler, and repent of your ſtrictneſſe.

Prov. 23.2.

2. Cunning.

1 King. 22.

3. Counſell carnall.

4. Queſtions.

Fourthly, how earneſt are they in all their queſtions, to finde out the leaſt degree which an obeyer of commands can poſſibly reach unto? May not ſuch a meaſure of beleeving, humility, and ſelf-denial, ſerve the turn? Muſt I of neceſſity either lend my money without uſurious contracts, or keep it ſtill? How ſhould a Common-wealth want ſuch as take uſe? Muſt I needs pray ſo, and ſo uſually in family? Needs be ſubject to my husband for conſcience, being a man, meanlier parted? Me thinkes men are too ſcrupulous in theſe caſes. Can yee not limit

us

us a little for the keeping of the whole Lords day? May not the publicke duties ſerve? And may wee not bee diſpenced with for private ſerving of God apart, if we worſhip him in family? Is it ſo materiall of what faſhions our apparrell be, ſo our mindes be modeſt? Or, what companies we come into, ſo we be our ſelves religious, chaſte, and ſober? Is it of ſuch neceſſity to prepare our ſelves ſo ſtrictly for the Sacrament? Or to examine others of their fitneſſe? Is it not enough that the Miniſter doth it? Is it required of us, to abide in our places, to doe good, to governe others by our example, and not to run up to the Citie, there to ſpare, and rake together for our backes, pride of life, and procuring of great matches for our children? Muſt a man abide in the vocation wherein God hath ſet him, without picking quarrels with it, wearineſſe of it, and changing it at our pleaſure for advantage? May we not ſometimes ſtraine a joynt to pleaſe wife, husband, friend, great ones? And ſo by a little yeelding, keep off the dint of that which would elſe light ſore upon us? Mee thinkes theſe things might admit more limitations then ſo. The world was never ſo miſchievouſly ſet (to uſe *Aarons* words, Exod. 32. 22.) for their wills and liberties, as now: And to this market every man makes haſte, and the queſtion ſtill is, What is the loweſt price?

1 Cor. 7. 20.

Fifthly, what are the wits of moſt men ſpent about, ſave the deviſing of trickes and diſtinctions to weaken and looſen the chaines of Commands? What arguments doth their carnall braine ſuggeſt, partly from probabilities to fleſh, partly from the prejudice of men againſt the perſons of the ſtrict, and partly from the multitude of the looſer ſort, or ſuch abſurdities as ſeeme (in ſenſe) to flow from the cloſeneſſe of commands? Some alledging, it wearies them to heare a Sermon above an houre long: Others, that they can heare more in an houre, then they can practiſe in a weeke: Others, that it confounds memory: Others, that now men have knowledge enough. And as in this, ſo is it in all other reſpects, and one or other cavill ariſes againſt every Command.

5. Wits.

Sixthly, how oppoſite are men in the purſuit of ſuch as ſeeme not to like of ſuch Coleworts as themſelves feed upon? Wee read how clamorous that Idolater *Mica* was, when the Danites had ſtollen away his Idols? How mad *Laban* was with *Iacob* for his Gods? And ſo are men in theſe dayes, againſt any Miniſters, who convince them of their bredths and looſe liberties? Men chuſe rather to loſe their blood then their eaſe, and forme in Religion. Surely, the people are growne ſo deep in love with this traſh of ſlight ſerving God, that they could ſcratch out his eyes who ſhould pluck them off from their Idols: And as ſhe ſpake (in another kinde) that the cuſtome of women was upon her; ſo the ſtreame and courſe of the world doth ſo inchant them, that it is death to them to ſtirre an inch.

6. Malice. Judg. 17. Gen. 31. 30.

Men will (to conclude) run and ride till they tire themſelves, to conferre with ſuch as they thinke of their owne judgement, ſuch as will ſmooth and ſow pillowes under their elbowes. But if they might converſe with others at the next doore, who are of another judgement,

7. Partiality.

2 Kings

they ſhun them purpoſely: And ſo (to conclude) wee all looke to buy by the largeſt Buſhell from God; but when we come to ſell, wee get the moſt ſcanty one that we can come by.

8. Baſeneſſe.

Looke among Papiſts, and tell me, what coſt, what extremities will they not endure, rather then their Catholicke cauſe ſhould goe down? But among us, where is there one of a thouſand that cares for the cauſe of God, the ſincerity of truth, or ſuch as profeſſe or ſuffer for it? Oh! moſt unthankfull people. Hath God taken all this paines to make his will familiar unto us, to reveale himſelfe to us in his narroweſt truths, to make his yoke ſweet, and his burden light, and goe wee about to caſt it off more deſperately now, then when our light was ſmall? Doe we thus requite the Lord, like an unthankfull Nation? Wee, who ſhould have been the cloſeſt and narroweſt toward God, and walked moſt uprightly and cloſely, doe wee kicke up the heele, and plucke backe the ſhoulder? Doe wee revolt and play the fugitives, with *Demas*, from the Banner and Colours of our Lord and Maſter? Oh! that this day our ſinnes might come to our remembrance. The Lord ſhame us for it, Brethren; eſpecially ſuch of us as have buried our care and cloſeneſſe, under a clod of carnall wiſedome, earthly affections, feare of men, love of our ſelves, cuſtome of the time, examples of our betters. The Lord (I ſay) gaſter us off theſe Idols, and teach us to leave off our correſpondencies with hypocrites, and to bee transformed in the ſpirits of our minds, that we may approve what is that good, acceptable, and pretious will of his, not onely in judgement, but in power and life of obedience. And ſo much for this Uſe. Now I haſten to the laſt.

Deut. 32.13.

2 Tim. 4.10.

Vſe 7.

Exhortation. Branches of it, three.

1. Mourne for them who have forſaken their cloſeneſſe of obedience.

And that is Exhortation, ſtanding of ſundry branches. The firſt whereof is, That we mourne unfeignedly for the deſperateneſſe of others in this kinde: Oh! If we be as ready to forgoe our Jewell and Crowne of cloſe walking, as this world is willing to robbe us thereof, we are not like long to hold it! Oh then! if the world be ſo reſolute to hold her own, how ſhould we learne to hold our owne by their example? What a ſhame is it that the children of this world, ſhould in their generation be wiſer then the children of light? Should we then dare to proſtitute our conſciences to ſuch? If wee might have all the glory of this world for our worſhipping this Idoll, ſhould we not abhor it? Is it now a ſeaſon to flye, to ſtagger, to betray Gods Commands? No, rather let us cleave the cloſer by their warping: and as a chaſte Matrone beholding a debauched ſtrumpet; cloſes more with ſobernes then ever; ſo let us doe with the obedience of Commands: when we come before God in our moſt ſpeciall devotions and prayers, let us not (with thoſe hypocrites) feel a pleaſure of our owne tickling us: let not us ſeem to diſavow the declining, looſeneſſe & hollowneſſe of others: and in the meane time, keepe falſe weights and meaſures within our ſelves; let not us have a traitors heart to keepe our breadths in Gods narrow, but come to the oath and covenant, to come under the authority of God, loathing all our ſlightneſſe, eaſe, baſeneſſe, bondage, bringing him ſo much the more cloſe obedience, by how much we ſeeme to deteſt the contrary: And having ſo done, learne we (with

Eſay 58.

David)

David, to priſe the purity of Truths never the worſe, becauſe others embaſe them: when he had (in the former part of the Pſalme) mourned for the manners of others, he addes, Gods word is as ſilver purged by fire from the droſſe: So ſhould we be ſo farre from quailing of judgement, or weakning in affection towards the commands of God, becauſe others vilifie them, that rather that ſhould provoke us to adore, and admire the purity of them: And not onely ſo, but to cry out with him, Helpe Lord for the godly men decay, and hypocrites encreaſe: Ariſe therefore, quite thy cauſe, deliver thy people, ſet them at liberty that ſticke to thy Name, and bring forth their light out of darkeneſſe, as the morning, and their righteouſneſſe as the noone day. Send forth O Lord, raine downe grace and goodneſſe, and let it beare downe this ſtreame of carnall liberty, as the ſea beares downe a brooke: Bring thy Commands againe into honour, and make all ſuch as teach diſpenſations againſt them as odious as Monkes and Friars: This is the firſt.

Pſal. 12.6.

Verſe 1.

Pſal. 37.6.

Another branch is, That all Gods people doe mourne and humble themſelves for their owne playing faſt and looſe with Gods Commands. What godly heart is there in the world that could not beteam God whole dayes & nights in this lamentation! Who ſhould ſo poorly know his owne ſpirit in this kinde (if he attend it at all) but this work ſhould be pretious? Either to rid his ſoule of her baſe ſlightneſſe, or to faſten upon it, the cords and chaines of God with more cloſeneſſe and delight: Say thus to the Lord, Oh I feel no power, no girding of loines, no awe, nor feare to lye upon my ſoule by thy commands; I ſit looſe to prayer, to watching, to hearing, to meditation: I feele this day ſlipt from me, without redeeming it to the beſt uſe, in all my ſolitarineſſe, company, liberties, duties, I have been as one in a dead ſleep; no vertue hath gone out of me this day, either of living by faith in the promiſes, or of compaſſion to the diſtreſſed, of love to the Saints, mourning for the afflictions of *Ioſeph*, I have met with objects of the world, of impatience, of uncharitableneſſe, and yet no chaines of thine have been upon my ſpirit, but I have walked as one at his owne tearms; Surely the cords of Gods Law have not bound my luſts as a ſacrifice to his altar, nor the loadſtone of his love hath not ſweetly drawne my ſoule to obey him with delight, but I have beene mine owne man in all theſe! My will hath not beene ſubject, and (as it were) bound up in thine. I have not beene my ſelfe under thy authority, as that Centurion was! I looke that my will ſhould bee done by all that are under me, yea I looke that they ſhould walke in all wel-pleaſing toward a ſinfull wretch, yea, obey me punctually, cloſely, univerſally, yea, my very thoughts, that he might be a ſervant according to mine owne heart, and whether I give a reaſon or no of my charges, I thinke it equall, that my inferiour doe nothing at all ſwerve from my commands.

2. Branch. Much more for our owne looſeneſſe in that kinde.

A forme of ſuch a mournfull complaint.

Matth. 8.

Oh! what ſhall become of me for my looſe heart, thoughts, affections, conſcience? What ſhall I anſwer for my dead, hard, lazy, empty, ſenſeleſſe, ſenſuall heart, in point of a tender, chearfull and upright walking with thee! I ſee *Sauls* ſubjects being charged to faſt, trembled to ſee his owne ſonne to touch a little hony, ſo farre were they from

1 Sam. 14.30.

2 Kings

from tasting it) and shall the awe of a man in a trifle (saving the vow) so absolutely surprise their wills, and yet the eternall and righteous will of God not be able to prevaile over me! O Lord, I deceive all that know me, when I doe the materiall part of a command, the life of the duty is absent; when I doe the morall part, the spirituall is far off; and although I see and know it thus, I am so chained under the law of my corruptions, that the integrity, the scope, the fruitfulnesse, the large-heartednesse of my obedience, is not to be seene: Oh! I offer sacrifices halt and blinde, wanting heart, liver and reignes: I am so fraut with my selfe, and the command of evill, that good is seldome present. A lust hath a principle in me, causing mee to love it, to serve it, to use all means to fulfill it, to shunne studiously whatsoever might crosse it: But I feele not that spirit of grace, which should cause me to obey, from a principle of sweetnes: still there is somewhat which me thinks I chuse rather to doe, and to be swaied by, then the law of love to God for his love to my soule! Oh! herein the Lord my God be mercifull to mee, that wheras I have found as much mercy as any, yet I have bowed to this lust, and that, and worship my owne fancies, and am as like to do still, if the awe of God lie not more closely upon my soule! Oh! that this fire might alway so burne upon mine altar, as might consume my drosse, and put some life and courage into mee, to get out of this Circle in which the Devill hath conjured mee, to walke deadly and basely towards the Commands of God!

Rom. 7. 23.

Nay (which is worse) O Lord, I am growne to this point, even to lie as a beast in a slow, groning under her burden: so lie I, in a sullen discontent of heart at the Lord himselfe, that he enlarges mee no better, when as yet I nourish my selfe, all the while, in my ease, and carnall distaste of his streight Commands! Oh! me thinks my cursed heart (becaus it cannot have her will of him) could even tell him to his face, That he is an hard Master, and gathers where he strawed not! Alas! I consider not, that he hath mee at the vantage, becaus I have lost the grace of my creation; nay abused a better grace of Mercy; and therfore may justly be punisht for the least Rebellion. And not only thus, but from this stubborne heart of mine, it comes, that I set my sayles abroad, and commit my selfe to winde, and weather: am not smitten when I breake all cords in two, as *Samson* I am loose in Sabbaths, in the curbing of my passions, my vaine thoughts have their through-fare, and lodge in mee, and yet I am not troubled, I swallow every gobbet, and let it go: Once I could straine at a gnat, but now I devoure Camels, and heare no more of them: Oh! Lord, I picke quarrels with those lawes, which have formerly been equall to mee!

And (more then these; Lord) I am growne to this sad point, that the sence of a bit and bridle, is (by custome of loosenes) quite slipt out of my mouth; I begin to frame God, to be such an one, as my base heart could be content he were: even a God like to my selfe, who will neither do good, nor evill: whose threats are as the clappes of thunder, without any stroke following: I hope to go on in a Round and way of

Psal. 50.

easy

eaſy Religion, and doing of one duty after another ſucceſſively, without ſtrayning of a joint: But as for any ſadnes of Commands to weigh downe my ſpirit to ſolid feare, (being thus accuſtomed to a ſlight and vaine courſe) I feele it not; God helpe mee!

Concluſion of this branch.

In all theſe reſpects, what ſhall a poore ſoule (O Lord) do, with it ſelfe? What (O my deer God) ſhall bring me back againe, after all theſe deſperate revolts, unto thee? I wonder that I ſhould not be wholy left, to utter woe and open offences! I know nothing in my ſelfe, why Satan ſhould not have mee at ſuch a bay, as to cauſe me to depart from God, groſſely, and generally, aſwell as in theſe ſecret rebellions! For, I waxe weary of thy yoke, and am content that others ſhould abide the heate of thy worke, and my ſelfe be releaſed! O Lord, I am ſo farre from pleaſing my ſelfe in this ſtate, that, rather then I would be under the miſery of my ſlightneſſe, I could wiſh thou woldſt caſt ſome other unpleaſing chaines upon mee; ſome ſtinging croſſe, ſome corraſive to eate out my dead fleſh: And, (as untoward as I am to ſuffer) if I deceive not my ſelfe, I could wiſh the ſweet fruit of ſuch a courſe, with ſome pinch to my fleſh, rather then thus giddily to provoke thy Majeſty by the tranſgreſſion of thy Commands!

Branch. 3.

But thirdly and above all, this is exhortation to all Gods people, to ſadden their hearts, and to lie under the Authority of Commands for Conſcience ſake. A moſt ſollemne point, above all, that I can ſay to urge it. As before I ſpake, when *Iacob* went to Luz God caſt a feare upon the nations, that they durſt not ſtirre a joint againſt him. Oh! ſuch a feare ſhouldſt thou beſeech God, to caſt upon thy ſoule in ſecret, whereſoever thou becommeſt, that it may hem in and compell thee to obey! As its ſayd of the clowd which filled the Temple, and cauſed the people to feare the preſence of God, who was in the midſt therof: ſo, ſhould this cloud alway lie upon thy ſoule, to ſmite an awe into thy ſoule of offending. Theris is a baſe ſpirit in us: it is not love alone, which can long hold us within bonds: Therfore we had need (as it is *Heb.* 12. end) to hold faſt ſuch grace, as may cauſe us to walke in reverence and holy feare. *Moſes* (ſumming up the contents of that Swans ſong of his, in two words) tells the people: Set your hearts to all the words of this booke, which I teſtifie to you this day, that is the law of the covenant: its a ſadde law: ſadly therfore ſet your hearts to it. He, whom wee have to do with, is one, to whom all things are open and manifeſt: his word is quicke and as a two edged ſpirit, dividing betweene the ſoule and ſpirit, the joints and marrow, the thoughts and intents of the heart. Dally not therfore with him: Its fearfull to fall into his hands: He will not ſpare us: but will puniſh our ſins. And, if we call him father, who judgeth without reſpect of perſons: paſſe we the whole time of our dwelling here in feare; For, our God is a conſuming fire. This in generall.

Genes. 35. 5.

Feare of God beſetting the heart a great meane to keep cloſe to God.

Heb. 12. end.

Deut. 32. 46.

Heb. 4. 13.

Heb. 10. 31.

1. Pet. 1. 17.

In ſpeciall, make conſcience of the moſt ſolemne command of the Goſpel, to beleeve in the Lord Jeſus, cloſe with this command. It is the moſt ſoveraigne and indiſpenſable of all other: Obey this, and obey all: for in this ſtands the obedience to all the reſt. The Lord hath ingaged all his glory and honour upon this one: That the moſt vile,

The command of the Goſpell to beleeve in Chriſt is moſt ſolemnly to be obeyed.

2 Kings

miſerable ſinner living, who is willing to come in with his load pinching him to hell, ſhall finde eaſe: Whether it ſeeme ſo, or no, this is the truth, he hath purpoſed to magnifie all his Attributes in ſhewing mercy to ſuch an one: He will have it knowne, that he can doe that which fleſh cannot, even love the moſt hatefull enemy in the world, that is weary of his enmity. This he hath ſet down with himſelfe from eternity; in time hath declared it to his Church, by giving his juſtice a full diſcharge in the blood of his Sonne. Hee is the upſhot of promiſes, and therfore looks that he be beleeved; yea, for a recompence hereof, that he hath made all *Yea* and *Amen* in him, he deſires but to be beleeved, counting them that doe ſo, to ſeale that he is true: and calling the reſt lyers. Conſult not now with fleſh and reaſon; Say not, that this word is farre from thee, it is neere thee, it is offered and pin'd to thy ſleeve, that thou mightſt beleeve it; conſent and obey this, and the worſt is paſt. As *Peter* ſayd to Chriſt, At thy command I will caſt in, though I have caſt all night, and catcht nothing: So ſay thou, I have long traded with mine owne inventions, devotions and duties, but now at thy command, I will try what thy promiſe is worth, and caſt my ſelfe wholly upon it for pardon, grace and life. If I periſh, I periſh. Venture ſo and proſper. Secondly, proceed to other commands: The ſame Lord of commands, bids us love one another; for love fulfilleth the Law, the end thereof being love out of a pure and good conſcience, and love unfained. Feare this command alſo. The perſon of man (who is thy immediate object of love) may, perhaps, ſeeme contemptible to thee; for what can he doe unto thee, whether thou love or love not? But he that made thee and him too, and hath planted you both in the body of his Church, under Chriſt the head; he it is, who bids thee love thy neighbour; love him by reproofe, and murther him not; love him by counſell, example, admonition, compaſſion: lowre not upon him, curb ſelfe-love, paſſion, indignation, wrath, envie, revenge, ſlighting of him, diſdaining him: Thinke with thy ſelfe, it is not for nought that all the commands are ſaid to bee done in this one, of Love: Thinke not that all ſhall be well if thou canſt but beleeve in Chriſt; know, that the Lord Jeſus himſelfe, who will call for faith at his comming, Luke 18.8. will call for love alſo. The want of love, and the due carriage of thy heart toward others, is a ſpirituall ſolemne command of the Goſpel as well as faith, and one day will appeare to be ſo: when God ſhall call thee to the Barre, and convince thee, how little fruit of love hath ever proceeded from thee. Therefore cloſe with this charge alſo; look not upon man, but upon that God who hath bound thee to him by this chain of love, and who will hold himſelfe wronged in the violation of it: lay a more ſolemne charge upon thy ſpirit in this kinde, then ever, and feele thy ſoule to lye under the authority of this command, as well as the former.

2 Cor. 1.20. Joh.3.33.

Rom.10.8. Eſay 1. Luke 5.7.

Joh.14. Jam.3. 1 Tim.1. All other commands iſſue from faith.

Matth.25.

And what more ſhould I ſay? From theſe two well-ſprings proceed all the ſtreames of Commands, concerning, God, Man, and thy ſelfe. Hence iſſueth a Command of a cloſe keeping the Sabbath, ordering thy converſation aright; hence comes that charge of walking circumſpectly, as wiſe: keeping thy ſelfe unſpotted of the world. Hence

Eph.5.15. Jam.1.ult.

it

it is, that thou art forbidden to have thy courſe in covetouſneſſe, to have any fellowſhip with the unfruitfull workes of darkneſſe. Hence alſo it is, that thou art bidden, Redeeme the ſeaſon; Walke wiſely toward them who are without: To take up thy croſſe daily, to deny thy ſelfe, to live by faith, to ſanctifie God in thine heart, and make him thy feare. And the like I might ſay of the reſt (for it were endleſſe to ſpeake of all.) Conceive of them all as comming from one rule of righteouſneſſe: And know it, hee that requires one, urges all: Perhaps thou wouldſt thinke it equall to obey the Magiſtrate, obey thy Parents, keep the Sabbath: but know it, the ſame God commands thee to preach in ſeaſon and out, to execute the righteous judgements of God, to be ſubject to thy husband, to teach thy children the feare of God: Theſe are ſpeciall ones, and leſſe welcome; but if thou obey not them, thou doeſt but play faſt and looſe with God in the generals: For all ſound obedience to God is equall and uniforme. I know what fleſh will ſay, Tis tedious to be ſo tied and tasked, to be held to it from day to day, never out: ſay not, I could be content to faſt and pray one day, to redeeme liberty for many: I could walk cloſe for a Sabbath, ſo I might be mine owne man all the weeke. But know, that the law of love takes no thought for continuance; it is no violent compulſion, as a ſlave to ply his worke; but as naturall as for the fire to burne, or the ſparkes to flye upward. Let the Law bee once written in thy heart, and it will teach thee holy wiſedome, love and delight to accommodate and apt thy ſelfe to each one in ſpeciall equally and conſtantly. The Law and Art of muſick in the minde, acts the fingers ends to ſuch a nimbleneſſe and preſentneſſe of ſervice, as is admirable. And if the writing of letters and characters upon Fringes and Frontlets, were ſo powerfull, as to prompt a man to the obedience of each occaſion: what then is the law of grace written in each faculty of the minde and will, in the reines and the ſpirit of the Soule? But here I ceaſe for this time. Let us pray, &c.

Heb. 13. 5.
Eph. 5. 11. 16.
Mat. 16. 26.
1 Pet. 3. 9.

Jer. 31. 34.

Simile.

The end of the ninteenth Lecture.

THE

2 Kings

THE TWENTIETH LECTVRE continued upon the 14. VERSE.

VERSE XIV.

Then he went downe and waſhed himſelfe ſeven times in Iorden, and his fleſh came againe unto him as the fleſh of a little child, and he was cleane.

WEE ended laſt time with ſome exhortation: But (brethren) becauſe mee thinkes I heare ſome ſay; Were it a thing within my power to compaſſe, there is nothing which I more wiſh, then to delight in the law of God in my inner man: But I finde no power to it. Tell me therefore how I might attaine it?

Queſt. Anſwer.

For anſwere whereto, I will finiſh the whole Doctrine with thoſe Meanes which direct hereto. The firſt and one mayne is, get the Lord Jeſus to be thy lawgiver. *Moſes* is a commander of rigorous, impoſſible duties, ſerving rather to convince the ſoule of that power of created righteouſnes, which we have loſt; then to enable us to obey. But the Lord Ieſus, is a more mild and mercifull lawgiver: who as he hath united God with fleſh, in his owne perſon: ſo therein he hath broken downe that wall, which ſtood up, as a Tower impregnable, between God and us: he hath made all levell and eaſie, and faſtned the hand-writings of Morals and Ceremonials, unto his Croſſe, that it might never appeare againſt us. Nay more, hee hath fulfilled all righteouſneſſe both of doing and ſuffering, that wee in him might be clothed with it as a Robe from top to toe, and might fulfill the Law by faith. I have at large opened this point elſewhere in the doctrine of it: Let us here urge the neceſſity of faith upon our ſelves, and cloſe with the promiſe, to make it our owne. The truth is, there is no command of God, but Chriſt hath made it poſſible and ſweet, and by a promiſe he conveyes it to the ſoule, ſaying; Take my yoke upon you, for is eaſie; and my burden, for it is light. Of our ſelves wee have another Law in our members, leading us captives thereto: a law of luſt, pride,

Meanes directing to obey. 1. Faith.

Coloſſ. 1.20. Eph. 3.15.16.

Practic. Catech. part. 3. Act. 5.

Mat. 11.29.

pride, ambition, ſloth, prophaneneſſe, hypocriſie, and ſelfe-love. Theſe naturally we take thought to fulfill, as *Paul* ſaith, Rom. 13. *ult.* But the Lord Jeſus hath deſtroyed this power in us of ſin and death, eaſed us of the impoſſibleneſſe of obeying through the weakneſſe of our fleſh. He hath quit us of being debtors to our fleſh, to fulfill it, and redeemed us to himſelfe. Nothing remaines now, ſave that wee put on the Lord Jeſus by faith, that wee renounce our old baſe bondage and ſlavery, that we be willing to be free-men, and that we cloſe with the promiſe of ſweet obedience, by our beleeving it. For this was his ſcope in eaſing us of one burden, to put upon us another, yet eaſie and ſweet. Let this then be the firſt Rule: If thou wouldeſt fulfill the Law, beleeve. Faith hath united all the elect to Chriſt his Fleſh and God-head, who fulfilled all righteouſneſſe, and was made under the Law, that he might be the end of the Law to righteouſneſſe for all that beleeve. Faſten then upon this, That the Lord Jeſus never brake one Law, performed all; never preacht Sermon leſſe then hee was bound to, never did one miracle leſſe then hee ought, failed in nothing, ground, ſubſtance, manner, meaſure, end of obeying; but did all in perfection: And none of this he did for himſelfe (ſure I am, not properly and purpoſely) but for us, wee were his ſcope: for our ſakes he did all. And why? Surely, that we might partake it, not onely in freedome from guilt and wrath; but alſo in acceptation with God, as his beloved, and his righteous ſervants, prepared for every good worke. As the Lord offered us Chriſt to the former end; ſo doth hee for this latter: he is as faithfull in the one, as the other: Therefore, ſunder wee not thoſe things which God hath joyned together: but put wee on Chriſt in both, to redeeme us from guilt, and to make us Prieſts and Kings, to offer up ſacrifices of all well pleaſing and obedience, with holy delight and cheerfulneſſe. He is faithfull that hath promiſed, who alſo will doe it. He who hath him, for his owne, who hath done and ſuffered all: hee, whoſe Chriſt is by imputation of righteouſneſſe, and by not imputation of ſinne, ſinneth not, fulfilleth the Law, and is that which he is unto whom he is united by faith. This for the firſt.

Rom. 8. 2.
Rom. 13. ult.
Rom. 10. 4.
1 Theſſ. 5. 24.
Rom. 12, 2.
Coloſſ. 1. 10.
Philip. 4.

Secondly, if thou wouldeſt obey commands cloſely, then muſe ſeriouſly of the ſadneſſe and ſolemneſſe thereof, and incorporate thy ſoule into it. Firſt, muſe of the ſpiritualneſſe of them. If Gods Candle ſearch the bowels of the belly, and pierce the ſoule; bee convinced in thy meditations, that the baſeneſſe of thy hollow, vaine, worldly wandring heart upon the Sabboth, vexes the Spirit of God, as much as working or playing: and ſo in other duties. Secondly, of the univerſality of them: Muſe therefore of this; It is not my wealth or poverty, my greatneſſe or meanneſſe, my learning or ignorance, which can diſpenſe with me; with God there is no reſpect of perſons: No time, no place, no circumſtances can preſcribe againſt God; he is one and the ſame object of feare in all places, duties, times, occaſions. Thirdly, muſe of the indiſpenſableneſſe of Gods Commands. Courts may diſpenſe with mens offences: Gods penalties cannot be bought off nor commuted. Gods commands are unappealable, comming from the higheſt Court of heaven: Lower Courts cannot be appealed unto from

2. Meditation of the object.

2 Kings

from the higher. Fourthly, they are his Commands, who is infinite in wisdome, righteousnesse and vengeance, sees, knowes and tries all obedience, is present every where, and strong enough to punish the breaches of any one; no man can avoid his eye, or escape his censure; He backs all Commands with threats, and pursues threats with revenges. Fifthly, they are absolute: no colours, no distinctions will be admitted; they are subject to no mans interpretation, but to their owne: They are both Text and Comment to themselves. Other mens charges and statutes are yet subject to construction, and interpretation, so oft as any ambiguous questions fall out about them, and by that means are often perverted quite and cleane from their sincere intentions: But no Divell, hereticke, or prophane person, could ever remove Gods limits, or overthrow his meanings: As they were, so they still abide. The word of God abideth for ever. Such thoughts as these being setled by meditation upon the soule, may be as powerfull to perswade closeneſſe in obeying, as the thoughts of bad men upon the wrongs offered them, provoke them to revenge. If the Lord goe with the one, as Satan goes with the other, they must needs prosper. Righteous (O Lord) are all thy judgemens, therefore thy servant feareth thee.

1 Pet.1.ult.

The third examples. Psal. 16.2. Psal.119.4.

Thirdly, its excellent for us to turn our eyes off from all slighters and paltrers with God, abhorring their declinings, Psal.101. But to bend the eye of the soule towards them that are singular in grace, and close obeying. So *David* tells us, That he set such before his eyes, till hee was ravisht with them: Doubtlesse (saith he) they goe not astray from any commands: As if he should say, oh that I were such an one! With the base and formall, a man should soon learne that trade: But the watchfull, the wakefull, the close, the conscionable, will soone teach us their practise; so that it will be a shame unto us to be otherwise, and it will fixe the naile of commands deep into our hearts as with an hammer.

Eccles.ult.

The fourth prayer. Psal. 119. 27.

Psal.119.

The fourth is Prayer, which is the constant helpe which Gods people have alway used to ease themselves by at this pinch. *David* prayes God to teach him his Law graciously: marke, graciously, that is, in the sweetnesse, ease, delight, and reward of it, not in the toile and difficulty thereof. So againe, Oh that mine heart were directed to keepe thy commands! They that feele the true weight of them, will groane under their owne weaknesse, and pray for strength! Hence that holy prayer of Saint *Augustine*, Give strength to doe what thou biddest, and bid what thou wilt! Turne all Gods promises and covenants into prayers; for there is no one command urged upon the soule, but it hath a promise annexed. Oh Lord, thou hast said thou wilt encline me to keep thy Law, Thou hast promised to write it and engrave it in my fleshly tables, to cause me to walke in all thy Statutes! Oh doe it Lord! Open mine eyes, that I may see the wonders of thy Lawes, their perfection and excellency, & then take the stone out of my heart, and make it tender, they may pierce into it, with feare and awe: Helpe Lord, my fruit is come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring forth.

Fifthly,

2 Kings

Fifthly, get humbleneſſe of ſpirit, and that will equall Gods righteouſneſſe. Murmure not, fret not at the cloſeneſſe of them, for that ſatisfies not God: But be as a worme before him, and tremble at his voice, as we ſee the poore wormes come ſhaking and trembling out of the earth when they feele the feet of any treading the earth. *Eſay* hath this ſpeech in one place, You have made me to ſerve by your rebellions. A proud heart makes God ſerve baſe fleſh. An humble heart which knowes it ſelfe, ſerves God, and is glad that it may be accepted. In Pſal. 2. 12. we ſee how baſe men take upon them: But whence is it? Oh, pride makes them caſt away all the cords of God from them! Pride makes them to ſay, Our tongues are our owne, what Lord ſhall controll us? A ſwelling proud heart will not endure any pinch of Law more then it ſelfe likes. But the humble wil take Law at Gods hands gladly, and concurre with him: Haſt thou (O Lord) bidden me deny my ſelfe? Abſtaine from fleſhly luſts? Poſſeſſe my ſoule with patience? my veſſell in holineſſe and honour? Its juſt Lord, thy will is a rule, I deſire not to ſee beyond it: Proud ſervants love a faire Livery, and great wages, better then cloſe commands: But the humble will take any worke upon them, and ſay, its their object. Beware then of a ſullen, queazy, coy and proud heart.

The fifth rule, Humility.

Sixtly, marke cloſely the threats of God againſt each rebellion: and the verifying thereof in experience, both in Scripture and daily. This will cut the combe of preſumption! For who have offended God and proſpered? Its a maxime: lot upon it, whether thou ſee it ſo or not, be ſure it will be ſo: As that old Prophet told his ſonnes, Bury me in the grave of the man of God; for all which hee hath ſaid againſt this place, ſhall ſurely come to paſſe. To get a weighty heart under threats (giving them a being in the ſoule, through faith) is the onely way for Commands to take effect: For God hath fortified the one with the other; if the fence be broken down, the corne lieth open to the ſtroyance of all beaſts. Obſerve cloſely, how God plagues drunkards, ſwearers, adulterers, Sunday breakers, and the like; and adde the patternes of the Scripture (oft preſſed by *Peter* and *Iude*) that wee may not thinke their damnation ſleepes: elſe we will bee Atheiſts, and frame God like our ſelves. But this will awe us? Such and ſuch ventured ſo and ſo, but they paid ſweerly for it; if we be content to ſhare with them, wee may ſide with them, but not elſe. For Gods wrath will not rot in the ſky. Deferring of judgement ſets the heart of a ſinner, yea hardens it to rebellion; but beleeving it workes feare and prevention, as in *Noah*, Heb. 11.

The ſixt rule. Obſerve Gods Judgments.

1 Kings 13.

2 Pet. 3. Epiſt. Jude. Pſal. 50.

Eccleſ. 7. Heb. 11.

Seventhly, deny thy ſelfe. Selfe and God will runne in a ſtream a while, as filthy dung, and pure apples in a river, till the one be ſcattered from the other. So our own ends and Gods make a poor ſhift to go together a while till trouble and loſſes, reproach and purſuit divide them, but then they ſever. Sure it is, That man who hath no other obedience for God, ſave that which will goe in his owne ſtreame, of eaſe, ſafety, content, quiet and welfare, will abandon God, when he is tried: Therefore he that meanes to walk cloſely with God, let him ſhake off ſuch weights as theſe. The like I may ſay of ſuch, as dare adven-

The ſeventh rule. Selfe-deniall.

Heb. 12.

2 Kings

adventure to ſuffer in Gods cauſe, upon hope to lick themſelves whole by carnall ſupplies. No, no: All ſuch build upon the ſands of their owne falſe hopes, the Lord will ſcatter them. I deny not, but that God is all-ſufficient to all his, and hath promiſed not to faile them; yea, to give them an hundred fold requitall. But this is to them that walke uprightly, Gen. 17. 1. not to hirelings who obtrude their ſervice, and know no requitals but carnall: Such, it is juſt with God to leave to their owne ſhifts; even to cry a confederacy, to feare the feares of the wicked, and to put forth their hand unto evill, becauſe of their afflictions: They will buy out the aire of a priſon, but their owne aire ſhall choke them; onely they who can truſt God in his promiſe, and are content to take his pay in good worth, what ever it bee, ſuch God will not forſake: And ſuch onely are meet perſons to obey, becauſe they are armed.

Mal. 3.

1. Pet. 3.

8. Rewards.

Laſtly, digeſt truly the reward of cloſe obeying, not onely in heaven, when it ſhall be knowne to men and Angels, who they are (though unknowne to the world:) But even here alas! Gods peoples right hand knowes not what their left hand doth: They acknowledge little to come from them, they keep all to themſelves. When did wee ſee thee naked and clothed thee? Hungry, and fed thee? Sicke, and in priſon, and viſited thee? Why are you ſuch ſtrangers to your owne duties? Then ſhall others be ſtrangers to your joy: onely your ſelves ſhall enjoy the priviledge of your own cloſe walking: For be yee ſure, God will not conceale it; cloſe love ſhall never want cloſe peace, unknowne welfare, and comfort of heart, proſperity in grace, growth and experience. You that walke in the regeneration of obedience with Chriſt, ſhall not only ſit upon Thrones hereafter in ſtead of your duſt and aſhes here: But in the meane while you ſhall fare as Chriſt fared; he who made it his meat and drinke to doe his Fathers will, had meat to eate which no man knew of: Nouriſh thou a mourning heart for ſinne, thine owne and others, a cloſe heart to obey, and no man ſhall bee able to judge what thy joyes are: Thy worke is alſo thy wages, and yet the Lord ſhall beſides ſupport thee otherwiſe; ſo that neither ſpirituall nor earthly requitals ſhall bee wanting, till at laſt that life of thine which was hid with Chriſt in God, ſhall breake out before all, Men and Angels. Then ſhall cloſe obedience bee ſwallowed up into exceeding glory; and the garments of joy ſhall bee added to thy ſecret conſolations, in the day wherein Chriſt himſelfe ſhall appeare in glory. And ſo much alſo may ſerve for this Uſe, and for this Doctrine: Whereto I wiſh from my heart, a bleſſing from God upon the Reader.

Heb. 6. 10.

Joh. 4.

Prov. 10. 29.

Col. 3. 3.

The next Branch of Naamans obeying, was, his cloſing with the promiſe.

The ſecond branch ariſing from hence, is, that *Naaman* waſhed ſeven times, according to the word of *Eliſha*, in reſpect of the promiſe added to his waſhing; and that was, That he ſhould recover his fleſh againe, and be cleane. This point (I told you) is as materiall as the other, one cannot well goe without the other; they are as twins, which live and dye together. The point I collect from it, is this: Gods promiſes muſt be beleeved according to the ſcope of promiſes: that is, according to the intent and extent thereof. I ſay againe (and marke well)

well) promiſes muſt bee beleeved according to that which is in them, and that which they import; neither muſt they bee ſhortned or ſtraitned, ſtretched or enlarged, neither made leſſe nor more then is in them. More then they are no man ſhall need to make them: for all the ſtore and fulneſſe of God is in them. Leſſe then they are, none may dare to make them. That which the holy Ghoſt ſpeakes in the concluſion of Revel. 22. Hee that ſhall adde any thing, or diminiſh from the words of this booke, the Lord ſhall adde to him all the plagues in this booke, and diminiſh his name from the booke of life: That I may ſay of the promiſes; Let none make them greater then they are, nor yet leſſer; but let every one take, underſtand, and apply them to himſelfe, as they lye in the word, not in the letter onely, but in the ſpirituall meaning and purpoſe thereof. Touching the ground of this point out of the Text, it needs not many words to be ſpent about it. It is evident that the obedience of *Naaman* in going to waſh, proceeded from no heat of ſudden alteration of minde, no pang or humour, no blinde hope, or had-I-wiſt, as who ſay, It's but trying, I will goe, hit I or miſſe I, it is but my journey. No, but as he was ſtrongly held back before, by a deep ſelfe-conceit; ſo now hee is drawne forward by as deep an inſpiration of God, and a perſwaſion that the promiſe annexed to his waſhing, was as certaine and undeceiveable, as the charge was divine and abſolute: and therefore in obeying God commanding, hee conſents to God promiſing alſo, in as full and abſolute a degree, and in all points and reſpects as the promiſe lay: that is to ſay, not that hee ſhould perhaps be cured, perhaps not; but that the cure ſhould bee whole and entire, no manner of Leproſie ſhould hereafter cleave to him any more, but as now he was naſty and ſcurvie all over, ſo then he ſhould be healed by the healing of God, (better then if *Eliſha* had laid his hand upon it) that is, as perfectly as if hee never had been Leper, and his fleſh ſhould returne to him as the fleſh of a little childe; ſo clean ſhould he become, and return home, and not repent him that he had beleeved the promiſe in the fulneſſe thereof. So much for the ground of the Text.

2 Kings

Doctrine. Promiſes muſt be beleeved according to their extent.

Opening of the ground of the point

Now (as I noted in the former point) here ſome may ſtep in and object, Why doe you ground a doctrine upon ſuch a paſſage as this of *Naaman*? Alas! his waſhing was but an outward act, and that occaſionall and perſonall, onely reaching to himſelfe, and determining with him: Our caſe is otherwiſe, and it muſt be a bottome of eternall truth, which muſt ground a doctrine of this nature, becauſe it concerns the perpetuall practice of a poore ſoule in reſpect of pardon and ſanctification.

Object.

To whom I anſwer in one word, That the queſtion is not here, what the particular of this promiſe to *Naaman* is, or is not: but what the nature of every promiſe requires, whether it bee occaſionall and temporall, or ſpirituall and generall. The point is this, Every promiſe, bee it what it will be, whether for once and away, or for adoe, being from God, requires an equall obedience and extent of faith to embrace it, and caſt the ſoule upon it, as well as the moraleſt and generalleſt promiſe in the Word can doe. The reaſon is plaine, becauſe in the one,

Anſw.

2 Kings

as well as the other, is encloſed that power and truth of God, which bindes the ſoule to an equall and uniforme obedience. I ſpeake now (and marke well) of ſuch promiſes as require our faith for the performance; for ſome promiſes are abſolute in themſelves, and reſt upon the naked word, whether we beleeve them or not, becauſe they be univerſall: As that the rainebow ſhall be a ſure ſigne of no more deluges: That ſeaſons of the yeare, Summer and Winter, ſowing time and harveſt, ſhall continue: That the Goſpell ſhall bee preached to all Nations: That there ſhall be a reſtoring of the Kingdome to Iſrael, and Chriſt ſhall in this world bee knowne to bee Lord and King of his Church. Theſe promiſes though they deſerve credit, yet ſhall be performed howſoever, being pitcht and appointed by God in their ſeaſons. But for perſonall promiſes not ſo: That particular promiſe made to *Abraham* touching a ſonne (if yet it were particular) or any other concerning a preſent mercy or deliverance, as that which was made to *Ahaz* of victory againſt the Syrians, or to the Shunamite, or to *Manoa* and his wife concerning a ſonne, I ſay theſe required as firme an aſſent of faith, as any of the generall. Hence it is, that uſually Chriſt effected no particular miracle, but he required faith to beleeve it to the full: If thou beleeveſt nothing is impoſſible: Did not I ſay to thee, If thou canſt beleeve (*Martha*) thou ſhouldeſt ſee the power of God? So that *Naaman* here in the promiſe of healing, was tyed to a punctuall cloſing, and caſting himſelfe upon the promiſe, as well as we are in the more ſpiritual and generall. And in this reſpect, this Text is a ſure ground of Doctrine to us, becauſe, if, even promiſes onely for preſent uſe, and of leſſe importance, required ſuch faith, much more doe thoſe require it which are of perpetuall nature, and far greater conſequence. And ſo much ſhall ſerve to anſwer the doubt.

Gen.8.22. Matth 24.13. Gen.18.10. Eſay 7.4. Judg.13. John 11.40.

Now I proceed to Proofes, and ſo to the clearing of the truth by reaſon, and anſwer of ſome queſtions, and ſo to Uſe: For the Proofes, firſt take that place, Eph.4 21. If ye have learned and knowne the Truth as it is in Jeſus. Marke how the holy Ghoſt prevents the carnall miſtake of Promiſes: They muſt not be taken up as our wit ſerves, or to make up our own ends; but as they lye in the way and ſcope of God. and as the truth is in Jeſus. This is a myſtery to a lazy, carnall, baſe heart, which conſtrues promiſes (as men that interpret Statutes) to their owne eaſe and ends: No, Jeſus his truths will not ſubmit to us, but we muſt come to them, and beleeve as the truth is in Jeſus. What that is, ſhall appeare after. Another Text may be that in Rom. 12. the laſt: But, Put ye on the Lord Jeſus, &c. He compares the Promiſe, and Chriſt to apparrell (as well he may both for warmth and ornament) and faith to the putting on of our apparrell. Now we know apparrell be it never ſo fit, yet if it be put on wrong, it will neither warme nor become the body: If that which ſhould cloath the legs or feet, ſhould be applied to the head, if that which ſhould bee put on the hippes or thighs, be put upon the ſhoulders, what an uſeleſſe and prepoſterous cloathing will it prove? Even ſo, if the promiſes of God be miſapplied, and miſ-put on, they will doe us no pleaſure, our worke will prove but unprofitable, and ridiculous. That which the Apoſtle

1 Pet.4.11.

ſpeakes

ſpeakes of the due preaching of the promiſes, and the whole word, may be applied to our hearing and beleeving them: *viz.* That wee preach the words of God, as the words, and ſo we muſt beleeve them, even as they lye, and as they are, without our mixtures, qualifyings, diſtinctions, ſtretchings or ſtraitnings: We muſt take the promiſes as God offers them: God made a promiſe to *Paul*, Act. 27. That he would give him all the ſoules that were with him in the Ship. *Paul* beleeved God, but how? Surely, that all in the Ship ſhould abide therein; ſo that when ſome would have gone out, *Paul* boldy tels them, That except they abode in the Ship, they could not be ſafe. Why? Becauſe the promiſe muſt be beleeved as it imported, and not as it was conſtrued by them: *Paul* underſtood the contents of it, and therefore told them, the promiſe was no promiſe, except it were taken according to it, to the purpoſe and meaning of God in it. God bids *Noah* build an Arke, promiſing ſafety by it: How doth *Noah* goe to worke? Doth hee build an Arke at his owne pleaſure? Doth hee make it of what forme and ſcantling he liſts? Doth he pitch it within and not without? No, he conſtrues the promiſe of ſafety in the Arke according to it, the meaning of the promiſe was, I will ſave thee by mine Arke, but I will have it ſuch an one as I appoint, elſe I will not ſave thee by it. Juſt ſo doth the Lord to us: He will ſave us by his Promiſe, by his Word, Baptiſme: But hee will have both beleeved according to that which himſelfe hath put in them, and not according to any carnall, Popiſh or ſelf-ſenſe of our own. There was a promiſe of protection to Iſrael by the pillar of cloud, and by the pillar of fire by day and by night: But how? According to the meaning of it, *viz.* That they muſt watch cloſely both the ſtanding ſtill or the removing of them both: They durſt not goe on, when they ſtood ſtill, nor pitch when they removed: And ſo the promiſe of conduct, being aright taken, became moſt uſefull to them: It was the promiſe of God to heare his peoples prayers in the old Teſtament; but they who praied were to pray according to it, that is, looking toward the Temple, though they were never ſo far off, as *Ionah* in the whales belly, *Daniel* in Captivity. See alſo *David* Pſ. 27. 2. I have called upon thee, looking towards thine Oracle, meaning the Holy of Holies, the beſt part of it, becauſe there ſtood the Arke of Gods preſence, and the Mercy-ſeat upon it. To conclude, the ſumme of all is, Gods promiſes muſt be beleeved according to all that God offers the ſoule in them, neither more nor leſſe.

Gen. 6. 14.

Num. 10. 34.

But now, ere we proceed to Uſe, a queſtion here offers it ſelfe: What meane you by this phraſe, According to a promiſe? And in what particulars doth it conſiſt? For anſwer whereto, this I ſay, that it conſiſts in two things: Firſt, in the due qualification of perſons to the promiſes. Secondly, in the due accordance of promiſes to perſons. For the firſt, as all may not medle with each promiſe, ſo ſome may medle with none at all. Promiſes and they, warpe, accord not. For why? They are unqualified for them, and that may be in two regards: The each more groſſe, the other more narrow. Touching the former, know this, Not one prophane companion, who can boaſt and ſay, I have got a promiſe, may apply a promiſe, for a promiſe muſt alſo get

Queſt.

Anſw. 1. Accordance of a promiſe ſtands in two things.

2 Kings

thee. There is no peace to the wicked, and therefore no promiſe: We apply no ſalves, no bands to a bleeding wound: For why? The bloud would beare it off, and marre it as faſt as its laid on. Thou haſt no ſenſe or need of any promiſe, for that belongs onely to ſuch as want. The Law and the reward of doers belongs to thee; no promiſe, at leaſt not of the Goſpell. In this caſe, beleeving is like to marrying. Not each party is a meet one for every wife or husband, but thoſe who are apt each for other. Who laughs not at a Scullion, or Cooke, or houſe-keeper, that burnes in love with the Lady or miſtreſſe of the houſe? Or at a Student, or Preacher, whom none but a great woman of nobility or honour will ſerve? Or at ſome young youth who marries a woman of threeſcore? Alas! they are miſmatcht, all ſee and ſay, money and wealth, or prepoſterous love for their owne ends, not for the due ends of marriage love, made ſuch matches. No, apt and meet ones may marry, they onely are beyond exception. So is it here: Not every one who is without a promiſe, may preſently marry it, not each baſe fellow ſteaming and ſweating out of the Alehouſe or Stewes: Such little look at a promiſe as a promiſe for the honour of grace, but at their owne ends, to gull themſelves with falſe hopes. *David* ſaith well, Pſal.119. Thy promiſe, O Lord, wherein thou haſt cauſed thy ſervant to truſt. But God cauſeth not every one to beleeve a promiſe, but forbids them as preſumptuous; yea though they dare ſay that though there were but three ſaved, they ſhould be one: and againe, what a foole art thou, that canſt not beleeve? I would beleeve I trow, or elſe its pitty but thou ſhouldeſt periſh! Oh thou foole, even of thine owne mouth!

1. In accordance of perſons to promiſes.

All ſorts may not beleeve promiſes.

2. *Anſw.* This for them. But ſecondly, a promiſe is excluſive, as well of ſuch as are in fairer way of beleeving, and that is of all ſuch as will bring of their owne coſt towards beleefe and ſalvation. Oh thou couſeneſt thy ſelfe, not knowing a promiſe: for a promiſe is ſuch a way of God, as craves the onely reliance of an empty deſolate ſoule upon it ſelfe: Thats the nature of it: its a royall thing, can endure no peere or partner. So much of this.

2. In the accord of promiſes to them in ſundry parculars. The ſecond accordance of a promiſe, ſtands in the qualifying of it to the perſon who may and doth beleeve it: or if you will in the ſeverall beneficialnes of a promiſe to the ſoul: and this more directly toucheth the point in hand. Concerning which to ſpeak fully, is no eaſie thing, howbeit ſome particulars I will point at for your better conceiving of it: And firſt, you muſt know, that this accord of a promiſe preſuppoſes the due order in which a promiſe belongs to the ſoule. This I would expreſſe in two branches. Firſt, the promiſe, being a parcell of the whole truth of God, requires that the ſoule doe beleeve the whole truth, before it can beleeve ſpeciall parts of it: Faith being a reſolution of the ſoule into the meere verity of him that ſpeakes in the Word, a part whereof is a promiſe: Why? Becauſe it ſavours more of Self, then Faith, that I beleeve thoſe things in the word which immediately concern my own welfare, except firſt I be concluded in this, That God who is the firſt truth, and deſerves to be credited for himſelf only, is the author of the whole word through. Hence Heb.11.2.

1. Promiſes muſt be underſtood as iſſuing from truth in generall.

the

the Apoſtle doubts not to affirme, That by faith wee beleeve that the worlds were framed by the word of God, and that things now ſeene, were made of things not appearing. This is but a remote thing to the maine object of faith which juſtifies: But yet its incloſed in it, as the pearl in the mother of pearle; he that lively beleeves one, may beleeve the other more eaſily, as deducted thence. The act of juſtifying is an act of that lively faith which doth more then juſtifie. So alſo true faith ſo beleeves a promiſe, that it alſo beleeves dogmaticall truths, practicall truths, threats, charges, admonitions, inſtructions, as well as comforts and promiſes, becauſe it lookes at him who deſerves the univerſall ſaving reliance upon Gods truth for himſelfe, aſwell as for our owne ends. This for the firſt branch.

Note.

Secondly, promiſes muſt be beleeved in that order of immediate ſaving of the ſoule, in which the God of order hath propounded them to the ſoule: then we beleeve a promiſe according to a promiſe, when we firſt beleeve that promiſe which concernes pardon, reconciliation and life, and then proceed to beleeve ſuch as concerne government and ſanctification: Firſt, thoſe that are our being, then our welbeing: As in a fat of wares, firſt we muſt unfold and take out the upper, then the nether. The prime and firſt promiſe muſt be firſt beleeved, then the reſt: I ſpeake now of the priority of order, not of nature, to us ward, not the word ward, for ſo, every good thing is given at once to the ſoule, Chriſt I meane, and all he hath: But for us, till we have beleeved the firſt of ſaving us, we cannot beleeve any other which followes upon it, *viz.* of mortifying a luſt, quickning to holineſſe. The like may be ſaid of the order of ſpirituall and temporall promiſes, till the former be digeſted, the latter cannot be. The reaſon, becauſe the firſt gives vertue, title and claime, yea influence into the other. This for the firſt.

2. In reſpect of Gods order, viz. firſt promiſes of reconciliation, then of ſanctification.

See 1 Cor. 1. 30.

Secondly, he who beleeves a promiſe according to a promiſe, beleeves it according to the intention of the promiſer: Each promiſe ſwims to the ſoule in the bloud of Chriſt, and therefore hath a ſtrong bottome, and undeceiveable. Promiſes are no looſe interlocutory words falling from the mouth of God, when he mindes other matters: Nor yet as mens promiſes, who firſt gariſhly make them, and after intend them: but firſt God meanes them really, and then fulfills them. To beleeve aright, is to beleeve as the promiſe is, ſtrongly and ſurely bottomed and grounded; they deſerve fully the ſoules reſt and affiance, not ſtaggering and doubtfulneſſe: We muſt not uſe promiſes as we would uſe little pegges or tagges, which though we dare hang our hat on, yet we dare not ſway our owne ſtrength upon, for they cannot beare it. But as we uſe ſome ſtrong brazen or iron crooke, upon which we durſt weigh our whole body; ſuch is the promiſe, Eſ. 26. 3. fix thy ſelf upon it, for the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength: Doe not as thoſe two Diſciples at Emmaus, who ſaid, we thought and looked that he would have riſen againe by this time, but now wee know not what to make of it; and yet Chriſt was even then riſen, and talking with them; when we warpe and lye aloofe upon a peradventure, this is not according to a promiſe, but when we lye cloſe to it, as a foundation which will beare us up ſtrongly.

2. A promiſe muſt be beleeved according to the intent of the promiſer.

2 Kings

3. When a promise is beleeved according to the due limitations. In two respects.

1. Of the variety of estates to whom they belong.

Thirdly, they beleeve a promise according to it, who beleeve it in the due limitation of it; and that in two regards: First, of the variety of estates to whom they belong. All beleevers are not equally capable of all Promises. Promises goe according to the need of Christians: Promises concerning crosses, belong properly to the afflicted: Promises concerning growne ones, concerne the strong: Promises to the weak, belong to novices. Promises touching them that stand, are of one kinde: and promises concerning them who are revolted, and backslidden, are of another. Each promise holds a naturall and geniall propriety to such as they concerne. No true beleever ought to bee a stranger to any of the promises: But hee ought especially to apply himselfe to such as are appointed for him. This is to put on Christs apparrell rightly. When men mismatch the promises, looking rather at such remote promises as lesse belong to them, passing by the proper and peculiar ones, they feele not the true use and benefit of them. What hath hee to doe with promises of growth, who is revolted? hee hath more need of recovering. What hath hee to doe with promises of knowledge, who is puft up with that hee knowes? Hee hath need rather of such as concerne the humbling of his soule. What should hee trouble himselfe with promises of support in greateft difficulties, temptations, persecutions, who rather had need to bee better resolved of pardon it selfe? Secondly, in regard of the variety of the promises themselves: for there must be a limiting of temporall promises in respect of spirituall. He that will enlarge temporall promises to himselfe in point of enjoying them, according either to the price which they cost, or the right purchased thereby, shall disguise himselfe exceedingly: For although they are fully purchased for all beleevers in point of right; yet not so in point of dispensation: herein wisedome orders bounty, according to the object upon whom God sometime enlarges, sometime restraines. All are ours, if we be Christs. Howbeit not alway, for equall measure or time. This is our baseneſſe, that we are carried to promises as the beast to her food; not by faith, but appetite. Faith puts the knife to the throat, and restraines the soule to the ensuing of such promises, not as her selfe, but as the Lord thinks best. And she teaches the soule, that it's better for her that God sometimes should exchange promises for her, rather then give her such as she would chuse and preferre, through lacke of discretion. For they are an hundred times better for us, which requite us an hundred fold in one kinde for such as we forgoe in another, rather then such as wee covet. If God will try some graces in thee, as selfe-deniall, and patience under sufferings, covet not thou the exercise of others, as of Sobriety, Cheerfulneſſe and Thankfulneſſe for Blessings.

2. In respect of the variety of promises themselves.

1 Cor. 3. 22.

Note.

4. When a promise is beleeved according to the extent thereof.

Fourthly, they beleeve a promise according to a promise, who beleeve it, according to the fulneſſe and extent thereof. And this branch doth most closely concerne the doctrine in hand. As many enlarge promises beyond that which they import: so many more doe curtoll them, and serve them as *Hanun* did *Davids* servants, cutting off their clothes by the middle: They are straitned in Gods enlargements, like *Ionah* who grudged that God should be so gracious to Nineveе. As it

Jona 4.

is

is with Beggars, who qualifie the meaſure of their Almes according to their owne baſeneſſe, not the bounty of him who beſtoweth. A Beggar will bee content with cleane ſtraw in a Barne to lodge in: But a friend will looke to be lodged in a good roome, and beſt Feather-bed. Why? Becauſe he meaſures his welcome according to his friend his beteaming heart. It ſeemes a great thing for a poore ſinfull wretch to obtaine forgiveneſſe; but as for other promiſes, hee thinkes them a farre off: Or, if hee get a few promiſes by the end, hee thinkes God muſt needs ſhorten him of others. But the Lord will have faith comprehend the length, depth & breadth of promiſes; yea, the fulneſſe of him that filleth all in all. Unbelief is like *Iehoram*, who being bidden to ſhoot the Arrows, and ſmite the ground, limited God to thrice, whereas God meant ſeaven times. Men having given us bread, ſend us for meat to another doore, and for drinke to a third: But the Lord will traine all his to know his doore, and none elſe, and to expect all from himſelfe. Men loath ordinary Beggars, and give at certaine times, but not ordinarily. But Chriſt Jeſus is yeſterday, to day, and for ever the ſame, upbraiding no man. All promiſes of God are equally *Yea* and *Amen* in Chriſt, one as another. Some one maine benefit there may be in marriage; but there are abundance of ſecond ones conſequent thereupon, all entailed to it: So is it here. So that hee who ſhortens and limits promiſes, doth not according to them, but contrary to their extent. Separate not the things which God hath put together: but rather make a golden chaine of one and other. If God will give me the beſt, *viz.* heaven it ſelfe, hee will not deny us the temporall. For the promiſes reach as farre as the merit. Chriſt died to redeeme body and ſoule from all diſtreſſes, though (as I noted) all ſorts of promiſes are not accompliſhed to all beleevers at all times, yet their right to them all is equall.

Eph. 3.
2 King. 13. 18.

Heb. 13. 8.
2 Cor. 1. end.

Fifthly, he beleeves a promiſe according to a promiſe, who beleeves a promiſe in the peculiarity and ſpeciall uſe thereof. For although each promiſe hath the fulneſſe of God in it, becauſe it coſt the blood of the Lord Jeſus; and no peece of his Teſtament, no one Legacie of his could be made effectuall to the Church, ſave by his death; yet he doth not thruſt all the vertue of his death into one or two, or a few promiſes, but for the more cleare ſatisfaction of the ſoule, he diſtinguiſhes his good things into as many ſeverall and peculiar promiſes, as the neceſſities of his people doe require. To the end, that every one that needs any good thing, may know where to finde it. And as Apothecaries, who ſell many wholeſome Drugges, doe not ſhuffle all together, but for the more eaſe and certainty, diſperſe them into ſo many ſeverall boxes and celles, where they may be ſure to finde them, when they need them, without miſtake or errour: So hath the Lord done, hee hath not generally and confuſedly put all graces and benefites into one promiſe; but hath diſpenſed them in ſundry promiſes. Not a good thing, but it hath her peculiar promiſe, to which the Lord will have all his people to reſort. And by this meanes he trains his people to be well verſed in his Scriptures, and to pick out promiſes as they lye; yea, promiſes which ſeeme to bee made to ſome ſpeciall perſons, yet hee will have

5. When it is beleeved according to the peculiarity and ſpeciall uſe of it.

Simile.

2 Kings

have them (as the Bee) to carry them home to their Hives. As that promiſe which was made to Chriſt himſelfe, Eſay 49. 8. he will have us apply it, 2 Cor. 6. 2. 3. That which was made to *Ioſhua*, Chap. 1. 4. he will teach us to improve it, Heb. 13. 5. And except there bee ſpeciall cauſe of the contrary, I mean that promiſes are proper to ſome, and incompetible to others: The Lord will have us ſearch each corner of his Word, to fetch out thoſe promiſes which lye there as gold in veins, for the comfort of his people. All promiſes made to the head belong to the whole body: all that concerne the Church, concerne alſo the members; and ſuch as concerne one member, doth alſo reach to another, circumſtances being wiſely obſerved. So that looke what a poore ſoule would have from God, whether grace to heare and receive aright, to pray or worſhip God ſpiritually, to endure patiently, and take up her croſſe, or to mortifie any luſt, to get a ſoft heart, to be ſetled and ſtabliſhed in faith, to be kept from this preſent evill world, or whatſoever elſe, one place or other of Scripture will help thee to a promiſe for the nonce: by which (if thou have a gift to goe to the right Box) thou ſhalt much more clearly and fully reſt thy ſelfe upon God for a ſupply, then if only thou ſhouldſt conſult with general promiſes, which (though they containe the particular,) yet are leſſe evident, and expreſſe not peculiar good things with ſuch accommodation as the particular doe. Our baſe ſpirits are content to generalize with God, ſo we have any promiſe, it ſerves our turne. And why? Becauſe wee uſe promiſes for faſhion, and make our ſelves thinke wee doe that wee doe not; whereas beleevers of promiſes ſearch out their owne Legacies in ſpecial (as if one ſhould ſearch a Will of a deceaſed friend) & as the Angels pry into the Mercy-ſeat, and look a far off to ſee what God hath promiſed. As common folke think they have ſtopt Gods mouth ſufficiently if they worſhip him any way, by ſinging a Pſalme, or reading a Prayer, halfe aſleepe and halfe awake: ſo deale they with promiſes. If they can catch any by the end, it is enough for them: As for culling out, marking or ſingling thoſe promiſes from the reſt, which might ſpecially ſtay, comfort, and ſpeake to their owne hearts from God, they have no skill; and accordingly is their gaine, generall promiſes, generall comfort. But I ſay, peculiar application of mine own promiſes, is according to a promiſe. Each promiſe will not ſuit to every neceſſitie; Speciall wiſedome and paines is required to get them, diſtinguiſh, underſtand and apply them as the plaiſters which ſerve for ſpeciall ſores.

Promiſes made to the head, to the body, to any member, belong to the members, to any part, to the whole body, except a limitation bee made.

1 Pet. 1.

6. When it is beleeved according to the ſcope and bent of them.

Sixthly and laſtly, he that beleeves a promiſe according to it, beleeves it according to the ſcope and bent of it. This is that which I ſaid in the prooſes: All promiſes as they are *Yea* and *Amen* in Jeſus; ſo they muſt be beleeved as they are in Jeſus. Moſt men ſcumme off the fat and ſweet of promiſes for their owne ends, leaving the lean and ſowre for whoſo will. But marke *Pauls* words there, Epheſ. 4. 21. That yee put off the old Man, and put on the New. This is the pad in ſtraw, which few men ſee in a promiſe. They thinke promiſes ſound nothing ſave good newes, and that they catch at greedily: But the ſcope of a promiſe is another thing, as it coſt blood to purchaſe;

Sa

So it muſt coſt us our luſts and baſe evils to forgoe. And there muſt be an harmony betwixt the purchaſe and the fruit. Chriſt proclaimes no man eaſe and liberty to live as he liſt; hee catches the ſoule by an holy craft of Promiſes, that hee may winne and ſubdue it wholly to himſelfe, who redeemed it: That every knee may bow, and call Jeſus the Lord, not boaſt onely of his ſalvation; but ſubmit minde, wit, ſenſes, will, affections, paſſions, purpoſes, luſts; yea, the ſtreame and bent of the whole man unto him. And in truth, hee who doth not deceive himſelfe in Jeſus, will not onely boaſt of him as Papiſts doe, Sweet Jeſus, ſweet Saviour, ſweet Chriſt: but will ſay, my Lord and my God, my King and my Prince. A promiſe under the ſweet name of it, carries a ſad inſtinct with it, into the ſpirit of a beleever, bringing in the truth, as it is in Jeſus, new Lord and new lawes. All old things are paſſed away, and are become new. This alarme no baſe hypocrite can endure: And therefore ſmoke doth not more ſcare Bees, then promiſes doe them. For why? They know there is ſuch an intimation in all promiſes, as they are in Jeſus, that whomſoever Jeſus eaſes of his yoke, him he puts another yoke upon, even of obedience and ſelfe-deniall, which to fleſh is irkſome, except hee who puts it on, doe alſo in the putting on make it ſweet and eaſie, as hee will doe to all beleevers. And theſe few may ſerve for a taſte to the reſt, for the due conceiving of this, What it is to beleeve a promiſe according to it.

Joh. 21. Matth. 11. 29.

2 Cor. 5. 16.

Now briefly two or three reaſons of the Doctrine: one may be this; becauſe there is the ſame reaſon of promiſes in particular, as of the Word in generall: But wee know the heavie denunciation of God, Revel. 22. end, againſt whoſoever ſhould dare to adde or diminiſh from or to the Word; defacing it, by either making it a monſter conſiſting of more parts, or of leſſer, then it conſiſts of properly. How then ſhould any dare to offer it to the promiſes, which are (as it were) the veines of gold in this mountaine, and the moſt pretious parts of all the Scripture, if any be more pretious then other?

Reaſon 1.

Secondly, except the promiſes be taken according to that no more nor leſſe then they beare and import, what a world of prejudice muſt needs accrue unto the promiſer? How ſhall Gods honour bee maintained, if the ſoule enlarge promiſes beyond their extent: or to that which never came into the heart of God to intend in them? For then muſt the erroneous ſoule needs bee ſadly defeated of her expectation, and ſo be ready to mutter and cavill againſt God, and make him a liar. On the other ſide, if the ſoule limit and ſhorten God in his promiſes, what doth ſhe ſave impute that to him which that unprofitable ſervant did injuſtly lay to his charge, That hee was an hard Maſter, reaping where he ſowed not? What can bee fouler reproach to God, then both theſe? whereas by eſteeming a promiſe duly, God is vindicated, and ſaved from diſhonour, in both reſpects, as neither being larger nor ſtraiter then his Word.

Reaſon 2.

Matth. 25.

Thirdly, what a ſnare would it prove to the ſoule her ſelfe, to bee alway in darkneſſe, doubting and demurring about the promiſes; for lacke of due underſtanding what the promiſes import. For why? The

Reaſon 3.

pith

2 Kings

pith and marrow of the promiſes lies not in the words and outſide, but in the ſenſe and meaning of them, which who ſo miſtakes and miſconſtrues, muſt either deceive himſelfe in looking for more, or defraud himſelfe in looking for leſſe, then the promiſes containe in them? What a continuall vexation is it then to erre about the extent of thoſe things, wherein to erre, is above all other errors moſt dangerous and remedileſſe? Many more reaſons might bee added, but the ſubſtance thereof will occurre otherwiſe.

Vſe 1. Of Terror. 1. Branch. Truths of God muſt not be taken by tradition and prejudice, but from the whole body of truth beleeved as Gods.

I proceed to the Uſes. Firſt, this point is Terror to all in generall, who doe not beleeve the whole body of truth according to it ſelfe, without the which promiſes cannot poſſibly be conſtrued aright. Now alas! what a common error is this? Who beleeves or deducts promiſes from the rocke of truth, as marble pillars digged out of the whole quarry? Men take the whole truth of God (for the moſt part) from the tradition of men, from the interpretation of others, which is no other, ſave upon truſt, as their Parents, Maſters or teachers have inſtil'd it into them, and I grant its meet to be ſo at firſt, for ſo thoſe Samaritans, John 4. at firſt harped upon the truths preacht by Chriſt by the information of the woman: But they did not reſt there, till by her they were drawne to heare him ſpeake himſelfe, and then they told her plainly that they reſolved their faith not into her report, but Chriſt himſelf. It is with many of us, as with Papiſts, who uſe the Church to bee the principle of their faith, whereas ſhe ſhould onely be a guide, an informer and directreſſe. Its not to be doubted, but the Church is the preſerving and ſuſtaining pillar of truth in point of guiding the ſoule to the truth; for had not the Church nurſed us, taught and train'd us up, where had we been? But this muſt not be enough to ſtabliſh us, except we meane to diſguiſe our ſelves, and bewray our ſandy foundation, when tempeſts and troubles ſhall try what is in us: no, we muſt put a difference betwixt our drawing to the truth, and our beleeving the truth, and never reſt till the bright morning ſtarre of the Word, the Lord Jeſus hath riſen in our hearts, who will caſt ſuch a through light into them as ſhall ſhine from Eaſt to Weſt, and enlighten us in all truth, yea lead us into all truth by his Spirit, that Spirit I meane which aſſiſts his word in the hearts of all humble and teachable ones. This will cauſe us not to take here a ſhred and there another, ſuch a command, or ſuch a promiſe as pleaſes us, not knowing what to make of the reſt, but to ſet open our whole hearts unto the whole truth, the whole body thereof, that it may enter into us, poſſeſſe and dwell in us plentifully, in every part; it will preſent to our eyes that God of truth ſpeaking in his word, and piercing thereby into the very marrow and bones, dividing the thoughts, and carrying the ſoule into the ſtreame of that excellency of his, whereby we may be convinced of his truth, it will ſhew us the truth of the written word, in the eternall word of the Father, full of Grace and Truth, the way, the truth and the life; in whom who ſo beleeves to ſalvation, doth alſo beleeve all and every truth which ever came out of his mouth, and wee ſhall no more doubt of that then of Chriſt himſelfe, in whom all truth is eſtabliſhed and gathered, as the whole verge of a garment into one knot; ſo that as no

Matth. 24.

Churches judgement muſt guide us, principle us in the truths of Scripture.

man

man bids us to prove that its day light when the Sunne ſhines; ſo wee ſhall need no proofe or demonſtration of any particular part of the word, having embraced Chriſt that eternall word of God into our boſomes, becauſe he brings all his truths with him, and having himſelfe fulfilled that one great promiſe of his incarnation and redemption, hath alſo in that made good all the other promiſes, and made them Yea and Amen, to the praiſe of his glory.

Oh therefore, how wofull is the condition of ſuch as forſake this way of faith, and goe to dig pits which will hold no water, boaſting that nothing ſhall ever pull them away from the truth, no feares, perſecutions, change of times, and I know not what! away with thy vain brags! If thou haſt not firſt planted thy ſelfe upon Jeſus, the body of truth, thy particular knowledge of truths will vaniſh of it ſelfe; for he who gathers not with Chriſt, ſcatters; but how much more when thy ſlight building ſhall be ſhaken with croſſes and enemies? Therefore gaſter your ſelves from ſuch frothy bottomes as will deceive you, get truth firſt planted in your ſoules with the love of it for ſome reall and maine good which it hath done you, and when Chriſt ſhall have brought his truth with the ſaving comfort of it into you, it will hold your hearts cloſe to it, never to goe from it, it ſhall keepe your hearts and mindes in the knowledge of God, it ſhall diſcover to you that rich hoord of promiſes which are hid in Chriſt, out of whom they are but as the ſound of many waters, and vaniſh as faſt as they come: This will teach us a rule of conceiving truth aright: This will ſcatter all miſts of error, darkeneſſe, miſtakes from the minde, and purifie the heart by the obeying of the truth, as Saint *Peter* ſpeakes, yea it will be a light ſhining in a darke place, and guiding the feet into the way of peace: Abhorre then a patched confuſed knowledge of truth, deſtitute of the truth in Jeſus, as thou wouldeſt abhor and loath utter blindeneſſe, and arrant ignorance it ſelfe in the higheſt degree: For indeed (ſetting aſide the ſhew of it) its but couſen germane to it, who abhors not a misbeleeving Turke or Jew as a very infidell? Who loaths not an Hereticke, Papiſt, Pelagian or a Schiſmaticke, as we doe misbeleevers? Yea (in ſome reſpect) worſe; becauſe they are ſo leavened, that it is eaſier to draw a Pagan (not prejudicate) to the faith, then ſuch. Its true, that the other have more of truth in them then the other: But they doe ſo corrupt, confound and miſapply truths, they maintaine not truth, in the accord and the harmony of truth; therefore they hold truth rather to overthrow truth, then to eſtabliſh it, and in effect are greater enemies to the promiſes, and to the truth in Jeſus, then they can ſeeme friends to ſome kindes of truth, whatſoever their abettors, and patrons would or can ſpeake in their defence. So much for this firſt.

The Spirit of Chriſt muſt be our firſt planter of truth in the ſoule.

Terrour to all Popiſh and blinde maintainers of truth upon error and opinion.

1 Pet. 1. 22.
2 Pet. 1. 19.

Secondly, and more particularly, its terror to all audacious and impudent ſpirits of hypocrites, who boaſt themſelves of faith in the promiſe, having yet no right to a promiſe. Promiſes if aright beleeved, muſt be beleeved according to their order, not conerary thereto, and againſt the edge thereof: Ah poore creatures, and raw beleevers! Did you ever come under the condition of faith? Were you ever in a ſtrait,

2. Branch. Of Terror. Hypocrites who ruſh upon promiſes ere they be fitted for them, reproved.

2 Kings

ſtrait, and at a deadly loſſe for want of a promiſe? Were you not alway beleevers from the firſt till now? Yes ſurely; you never came under the Law to drive you to a promiſe, and to make it ſweet to your taſte, drinke to one a thirſt: Therefore you dream of promiſes like brainſick folke. Once a phantaſtick fellow ſtanding upon a Tower, would needs have men to beleeve that each ſhip comming up the channell, was his owne; whereas it was neither ſo, nor ſo. Even ſo doe theſe: But know it, you have neither part nor fellowſhip in this buſineſſe of promiſes. We have a rule in Phyſicke, that humours muſt not be raw, but met and digeſted, ere they can be purged; elſe phyſicke ſcatters them rather into the parts of the body, then expells them. But if they be once ſetled, phyſicke will purge them: So ſay I to theſe, your luſts are violent & fierce, not brought to an head, but by the conviction of conſcience, and the ſpirit of bondage; if they were, then perhaps the promiſe being applied in ſeaſon might purge them out; but elſe the promiſe is ranke bane unto you, and would rather diſperſe your luſts, make you more jolly, mad, reſolute in ſinning, without feare or remorſe, then rid your ſoules of them. Promiſes breed either the beſt bloud in mens ſouls, or worſt, if kindly appiled, according as the truth is in Jeſus; when the ſad Schoole-maſter of Rebells hath once ſent them to Chriſt, they breed the beſt, ſettle the ſoule, produce faith, and cleanſe the conſcience: But when they are catcht at by bold and preſumptuous ones, who (although there be but three ſaved, yet) looke to be of them, they breed the worſt bloud of all, even the bloud of impudent ſecure preſumption. Therefore away from promiſes all ſuch! hands off! be affraid to mix with them, Gold will not unite with droſſe, nor promiſes with you; rather goe to the terrors of God, which may (like darts) ſmite through the dead loines of your ſoules to tame you, and prepare you for purging: Goe to *John Baptiſt* firſt, to caſt downe every high hill, to fill every valley, and fit you for the King of heavens free paſſage upon your hearts, and then ſhall you perhaps ſee what a promiſe meanes; till then you ſleep under the hatches dangerouſly, till you be throwne into the ſtorme of wrath, which yet will not ceaſe then neither. Oh ye proud Phariſees, Papiſts, Pelagians, what have you to doe with promiſes? As he ſaid to them, ſo ſay I to you, what doe you here? Who taught you to eſcape vengeance to come? You are the vipers who fret in ſunder this wombe of promiſes: Can you indeed doe as you ſay, that is, fulfill, and more then fulfill the Law, can ye merit and ſupererogate? Surely then promiſes, and you accord not; your righteouſneſſe hath deſtroyed the righteouſneſſe of God: As for promiſes and Chriſt himſelfe, you make him but a ſtalkinghorſe to a proud heart, and as a ſtirrop to get up into your owne ſadle! when you have tired your ſelves in your owne wayes, and wearied your ſelves in your error, compaſſing your ſelves with your owne ſparkles, this is the portion which God gives you, Eſay 50.ult. even to ſinke in your owne ſweat, and to lye down in ſorrow. Behold all you that venture upon a promiſe, in this pickle, wonder and vaniſh, for you ſhall not beleeve the promiſe, though a man of a thouſand ſhould declare it unto you: That Doctrine that belongs to you is a doctrine

Simil.

Matth.3.7.

Act.13.38.39.

doctrine of deſpaire in your ſelves, for your ſtout hearts, and ſtanding out with God. This Word muſt firſt caſt downe all high thoughts, and make you calme, ere ever the doctrine of a promiſe can finde entrance into you. What have you to doe with peace and promiſes? Turne behinde *Iehu* the furious marcher, arm'd with the revenge of God to humble your ſoules. So much for this. 2 Cor. 12. 4. 2 King. 9. 22.

And thirdly (leſt I ſhould forget it) let this be terror to that generation of Rome, who make no bones of the Lords promiſes, but devoure them all whole, without ſcruple. Who can read thoſe uſurpations of the Romiſh Whore, and impudent claiming of promiſes, even the choyceſt of all which the Word containes for the comfort of the true Spouſe of Chriſt, in all her turmoyles under her malicious enemies? Dare they who are the tyrants, lay claime to the promiſes which onely belong to the innocent Saints? The perſecutors themſelves to the promiſes of the perſecuted members? An harlot to the promiſes of the chaſte Matrone? When that wofull *Gregory* the Pope, called *Hildebrand*, or *Brand de Hell*, trode upon the necke of good *Henry* the fourth Emperour, he uſed theſe words; Thou ſhalt trample upon the Serpent and Cockatrice, and tread upon the Lion and Dragon: Can any modeſt eare heare ſuch abuſe of promiſes? I ſpeake not onely for the malitiouſneſſe of calling a Lamb, a Lion, and Dragon: but the prophane arrogating of ſuch a promiſe to himſelfe, who indeed was one egge of this Aſpe and Serpent, whom Chriſt ſhall cruſh and deſtroy. But who wonders at this in him? Who takes upon him to make Scripture and marre it at his pleaſure? So he takes that promiſe to himſelfe, Pſal. 2. 8. *I will give thee the Nations for thine Heritage, and the Gentiles for thy Poſſeſſion.* And thus he defends his unlimited juriſdiction. And againe, *The wicked ſhall hoord up treaſure, but the righteous ſhall poſſeſſe it.* Job. 27. 16. This ſerves his turn for his raking in of Treaſure. So againe, *I will give thee the Keyes of the Kingdome*, Matth. 18. This for the pardoning of ſinne. He might as well take one promiſe from the Divell, as abuſe ſo many of Gods; Behold, all the Kingdomes of the world, they are all mine, and I wil give them thee, if thou wilt worſhip me. Sure I am, of all other promiſes this moſt fitly belongs to him, upon the condition. But as for all other, Oh wofull prophane mouth, to chalenge promiſes contrary to their ſcope. *Paul* I know, and *Ieſus* I know; but who art thou? Terrors are for thee, not promiſes. 3. Branch. Of terror. Popiſh abuſers of promiſes terrified. Pſal. 90. 11.

Secondly this point ſerves for uſe of ſharp reproofe, and that of ſundry ſorts: Firſt, of ſuch as being under the condition of a promiſe, yet refuſe to caſt themſelves upon it. I ſpake of theſe before: but this point enforces it much more. For what is ſo according to a promiſe, as that they who need it, apply it? But theſe dally with it, paſſe it by. Their ſeverall objections have been anſwered before. Now I onely preſſe reproof upon them. Light is ſowne for them, but they will not ſee it; but goe on with their burden, as if they would offer their eares to be boared for ſlaves. As thoſe mentioned laſt, are in one extreame, and ſnatch at that which is denyed them (for ſtollen waters are ſweeteſt: ſo theſe cannot make uſe of that which belongs unto them, when yet it is pind on their ſleeves: To whom I ſay as *Eſay* did to *Ahaz*, *Vſe* 2. Reproofe. 1. Branch. Pſal. 97. 11.

2 Kings

Eſay 7.13.

when he refuſed to aske a ſigne: Is it not enough for you to grieve men (Gods Prophets) but you will grieve my God alſo? What? Are you too well offered, and cannot ſee when you are well uſed, nor diſcerne your friends from your foes? Doe you thinke it is enough to nod your head (as Aſſes doe) at a promiſe, beleeving it onely as a tale told, but with-draw the affiance of your ſoules from it? Is it enough for you to moane and complaine, to deſire and mourne? Are theſe faith? Is it better for you to ſhrugge in the cold weather, and to wiſh a fire, yet in the meane time to ſtarve for lacke of that which is offered you? To goe naked, and let the garment lye by unoccupied? Oh! checke your ſelves bitterly for this irregularity, whatſoever the cauſe be, whether unworthineſſe, or ſloath, or ſullenneſſe, it is not according to a promiſe, that I am ſure of. Oh! get your ſoules out of this emptineſſe into the life and marrow of a truth: Learne the truth as it is in Jeſus, that you put him on, being naked. Not to marry the promiſe, being faire for it, is contrary to a promiſe. But to beleeve, and to caſt your ſelves upon the Word, to rid your ſelves of ſtaggering, accords moſt kindly with it. So much for this.

2. Branch Of Reproofe. Epheſ.3. 16. Pſal.78.19.

Secondly, this reproves all limiters and reſtrainers of promiſes: for that is not according to a promiſe. The truth in Jeſus is the largeneſſe of it: Its length, depth, breadth, & height, all dimenſions are in it. Thus thoſe Iſraelites ſtraitned the holy One of Iſrael: Can hee prepare a Table in the Wilderneſſe? This is our curſed ſpirit: when a promiſe ſeemes true in the generall, yet in the particular not ſo: as *Martha* confeſſes the power of Chriſt to bee able to doe all things; but when it came to the point of raiſing her brother, then ſhe ſaid, Lord, hee hath been buried foure dayes, he ſtinkes. What a baſe carnall limitation of Almightineſſe is this? See what a contrariety is in our hearts to a promiſe, according to the extent of it. As the Cable ſeemes to a Needles eye, ſo doth all the points of an extended promiſe ſeeme to our hide-bound hearts. Gods enlargements worke by contraries, and make us the more ſtraitned; as in the point of the ſame, or the kinds of promiſes, and ſo the reſt. Now I thinke God hath heard my prayer: but how long he will, that I (ſaith one) know not: it ſeems too much to preſſe hard upon him ſo long, ſo often, for ſo many favours. True, if he were a man, or a dry pit; but hee is a God, a fountaine of living waters: Men will bee weary of doing good; but it is Gods nature to doe it, as the ſtreames to flow. Who thinkes it a wrong to a fountaine to draw from it daily? Doth it not come alway more freſh and ſweet? It is the honour of a Prince to look at himſelfe in giving, not at others. The oftner thou commeſt to a promiſe, the welcomer. It is according to the truth, as it in Jeſus. Oh (ſaith one) I have truſted God for pardon, but as for purging my corruptions, of pride, eaſe, vanity, the world: or if ſo, yet for purging or weakning this or that beloved luſt, cannot beleeve it. Why? Is God the God of the valleyes onely, not of the Hills alſo? So (ſaith another) I can truſt God for heaven, but not for outward things: for my ſelfe, but not for my children; while I live, but not when I muſt dye, loath I am to heare of that: or, for the preſent, ſo farre as I finde my needs; but what may hereafter

Joh. 11.39.

Limiters and reſtrainers of promiſes, reproved.

Jer.2.13. Eſay 26.3. Heb.13.8.

Sundry inſtances of it.

1 Kings 20.28.

hereafter betide mee in my name, health, ſtate, ſafety, liberty God knowes! Doth God know, and dare not you beleeve? Is this according to a promiſe, and the extent thereof? Truly, we have all a Pope in our belly: thats unbeleefe: we go farre onward in Religion: But we have hearts which ſhrinke in the wetting, and hold not out in breath and pace with promiſes; grudge and cannot beteame our ſelves the wealth and fulneſſe of God, leſt we ſhould be compleate in him, and too wealthy by him. *Ionah* grudged promiſes to others, but we are envious to our owne ſoules. I remember what once a devout votary prayed: Lord (ſaith he) grant me my petition this once, I come not often to trouble thee, and on condition thou wilt grant me this, I will never trouble thee more: Oh baſe wretch! Is thine eye evill becauſe Gods is good.

Popery cares for no faith.

Thirdly, this reproves all ſuch as ſtretch out promiſes beyond their bounds, and ſet them on their owne Tentors till they rend them. They could beteame the temporall promiſes of God to themſelves and the Church, for deliverance and redemption from all enemies, for peace, protection and welfare, were unlimited: But thoſe which touch their ſouls, eſpecially to kill their luſts, they care not how narrow they frame them, even as the bed and covering of which *Eſay* ſpeakes, that is ſo narrow, that it will not wry them warme. They beleeve not promiſes as they are, but fancy them: They chuſe rather that the buſh would not burne at all, then that it might not conſume in burning; where God ſtraitens they enlarge: Shalt thou teach Jeſus how to frame his truths? Surely this kind of receiving of truths, is not according to Jeſus, and the honour of Jeſus, but according to Self, and carnall ſelfe-love. Thou maiſt as well take upon thee to alter the whole frame of Scripture, as of promiſes, for God hath bounded them, and their land-marks cannot be removed. Apply thy ſelf unto them as they are, for they will not accommodate themſelves to thy humor, thy ſeaſons or contents.

3. Branch. Enlargers of promiſes beyond their due bounds, to be reproved.

Fourthly, this is reproofe to all, who beleeve not promiſes according to the intention of them: They make them weaker and inſufficienter then they are. This doth intollerably trench upon the honour of Jeſus; this (of all the reſt) is farre from embracing the truth as it is in Jeſus. What is it which Jeſus hath not done or ſuffered to ſtabliſh and ground truthes? And yet how baſely doe we handle him in this? We look rather at our little ſins in our beleeving, then his great promiſes. Oh (ſaith one) if my ſinnes had not been ſo deep died, ſo odious and long lien in, I ſhould hope well. Rather thou ſhouldeſt ſay, if mine heart were not ſo hardned, that I am paſt all feeling and faith, I ſhould doe well. If thy ſinnes have not driven thee to be deſperate in rebellion and contempt, they are not ſurely too great for mercy to pardon: Looke upon *Manaſſe* and *Paul*, 1 Tim. 1. 13. Though I were a perſecutor, a blaſphemer, and injurious; yet mercy and truth abounded in Chriſt Jeſus: He ſaith not, ſinne abounded beyond mercy. Oh (ſaith another) But I have ſinned ſince my firſt enlightning, ſin'd againſt the remedy, adding drunkenneſſe to thirſt. What? Doſt thou ſo ſtill, and nouriſh a rotten peace, and a ſecure heart ſtill againſt the promiſe? No, but thou doubteſt that thy abuſing the meanes, and hardning of

4. Branch. Not to beleeve a promiſe according to the intention of it, is ſinfull.

2 Chron. 33. 12.

2 Kings

heart, will not be pardoned: But know that the Lord Jesus his sufferings are of a deeper nature to merit, then thy sinnes to destroy: He was made all sinne; satisfied for all sinne, he was a nature of sinners, not a sinfull person onely; and therefore can pardon even them that murthered him: and not in vain is that example set down in Acts 2.30. to prevent that feare. They who come to Christ must come to him not as the greatest sinners onely, but as to the greatest Saviour, able perfectly to save all who come unto him. The strongest eye must bee cast upon his strength, not upon thy deservings. The mystery of mercy is to save to the uttermost, that so the soul may break, and God may be honoured to the uttermost. Well, but yet he pardons none, save such as have faith, and how shall I know that he will give it me? I answer, the promise that offers pardon, workes faith to beleeve it, and therefore its said that it creates the fruit of the lips; which is peace: it offers ease to him that is loaden: if it offer the effect, it must needs worke the cause. But (saith a poore soule) this might be, if mine affections would rise to it with some earnestnesse, but I am dead, and under infirmity. Nay, even then also can the Lord create this hand of faith in thee, by the seed of the word: how did *Paul* lie under sad buffetings, yet this grace was sufficient for him. In a word, what ever the sense of thy weaknesse be, yet its Gods strength which thou must take hold on to make peace, and that comprehends thy weaknesse, when thou canst not comprehend that strength. So much for this.

2 Cor.5.21.

Heb.7.25. Esay 27.5.

Esay 57.16. Matth.11.29.

2 Cor. 12.9.

5. Branch. Unapt appliers of promises, or other parts of the word, reproved.

Fifthly, this reproves such as runne to promises, without wisdome, aptnesse, and the particular necessities under which they live. When they should runne to the promise for comfort, they rather please themselves in running to the threats of the word for deeper humbling, that pleases them better, because they thinke it may better be felt; but this course sutes not with the truth as it is in Jesus, which requires that each malady apply it selfe to her proper remedy. This causes the wound to rankle, not to heale. When men are called to doe some speciall service and duty, they forsake that, and rush themselves upon suffering, promising to themselves that God will sustaine them, and so provoke needlesse sorrow, like *Ionah* to themselves, and all by their rashnesse. Others being called to suffer, shunne that and promise to themselves strength in doing: But this is to misapply promises, for they alway attend upon commands, and while we be in Gods way, not our owne: God payes no man wages for doing his own work. Others promise themselves great blessings upon attempting difficult workes above their strength, unto which they have no calling, leaving their Ministery ere God knocke them off, or thrusting themselves into trades in which they want skill, leaving their owne, and the like. But the wiser way for them, were to apply themselves unto promises, which concerne those speciall callings, conditions and waies, unto which God calles them.

Jona 1.6.

6. Branch. Prepostor ous appliers of promises, reproved.

Sixtly and lastly, those are here to be reproved who doe in any kinde goe to worke prepostorously with the promises, contrary to their nature and use or scope; who separate them from their end, which is to mortifie, purifie, and better the soule, as well as to comfort and pacifie it.

it. Alſo all ſuch as miſtake, diſcover, darken, ſtretch, diſ-joint the promiſes, who take not ſuch a due meaſure of the promiſes as they ought, putting them on as they may beſt fit them, and ſo never come to the kindly uſe and fruit thereof as the Lord offers them. Of which I ſay no more, this ſhall ſerve for this whole Uſe of reproofe.

Verſe 3. Exhortation.

Thirdly, this point ſerves for Exhortation, to incite and draw all who would beleeve aright, to beleeve according to the uttermoſt extent and purpoſe of a promiſe; and not to defraud the ſoule of that due which the Lord allowes her. This is the way to engage the ſoule in God & to walke moſt comfortaly in the life and practice of faith. God requires no ſmall ſervice and coſt at his peoples hands, which will hardly be, except the ſoule be deep in Gods bookes, and that cannot be, till ſhe come to beleeve promiſes according to their full extent. To this end, two things would be knowne. Firſt, what ſhould the ſoule doe that ſhe might beleeve a promiſe, according to the reach of it. Secondly how ſhould ſhe practiſe and ſet this grace on worke? For the former of theſe, three things would be done. Firſt, the ſoule muſt fathom and comprehend a promiſe truly, Eph. 3. 15. 16. That you may comprehend with all Saints, what is the length &c. That which the woman John 4. tells our Saviour, I may ſay of this, The Well is deepe, and there is nothing to draw with. There is depth in a promiſe; but few are men of underſtanding to fetch it out. There may be enough in it, for ought moſt men looke after: their ſhallowneſſe diſcourages them from attempting it. Vertue is gone out of the Lord Jeſus into it; both for life and godlineſſe, this and a better life, in croſſes and bleſſings, for all turnes, ſo that each idle cavill of a baſe heart ought not to elude it: Hath God ſet it open for his whole Church to be filled with the fulneſſe thereof, and ſhall it not be ſufficient for a poore members ſupply? Accuſtome thy ſelfe to deal with a promiſe, as the marriner doth with the ſea, whoſe depth he is ever and anon ſounding leſt his ſhip ſhould runne a ground, and be ſwallowed up. Thy miſunderſtanding may eclipſe the beauty of it, thy ignorance and blindeneſſe may fruſtrate thy benefit, but ſtill the promiſe ſhall ſtand nevertheleſſe full of water of life. Enlarge thy cord and plummet, that thy ſlight heart deprive thee not of both the view and of the uſe of it.

2. Queſtions. 1. How a promiſe beleeved.

1. A promiſe muſt be ſounded.

Secondly, having found out the bottome and depth of a promiſe, beſtow paines, and draw waters plentifully out of this well of ſalvation, beſtow good labour and travell. In fetching up water out of deep wells, you ſhall ſee how many hands at once are at worke at the wheele or pully, to get up the bucket. This is the worke of faith, alway to be tugging at the well with cable and armes, to get out this water of life. Say thus, here it is put Lord by thy ſelfe, and to be had, I will therefore by thy ſtrength handle a promiſe according to the uttermoſt of that which is in it, I will draw, and that with joy, for there it is and thus it is to be had. Its ſad working hereat with the moſt; but it ſhould be a merry work; we ſhould ſing at it, and deceive our toil by the ſenſe of our neceſſities, and the variety of thoſe ordinances, meditation, prayer, and the like, muſt be our hands, and unweariedneſſe muſt be our inſtru-

2. Draw out of this welſpring of ſalvation.

Eſay 12. 3.

2 Kings

instrument. Take wee heed leſt through ſloath and a baſe heart, we content our ſelves with ſcrappes and puddle water, who might fill our ſelves with good things, and with rivers of water ſpringing up in us to eternall life.

3. Give not over the promiſe, though long held off.

Thirdly, give not over a promiſe, although the error of this wicked world, and Satan, together with the Lords delayes, ſhould weary us, eſpecially under our afflictions. If our Lord Jeſus his diſcouragements could have killed the courage of that poore woman of Canaan, ſhe had never obtained a cure. Oh! our Saviour did what hee could to try, whether ſhe would be beaten from the promiſe, *viz.* That Jeſus, the ſonne of *David*, came to ſave both the bodies and ſoules of all truly diſtreſſed ones, Jewes and Gentiles. But ſhe had ſo farre extended the promiſe, which Chriſt ſeemed to reſtraine onely to the Jewes, calling the reſt Dogges, that it was ſtrange ſhee was not out of conceit, as one miſtaken: But, as if ſhe had been in his boſome, ſo doth ſhe hold faſt the promiſe; Though he ſay nothing, yet hee will doe ſomewhat, I will ſtill keep my right, he meanes not Iſrael according to the fleſh, but the promiſe, and ſuch an one am I. Shee knew promiſes looked not at the worthineſſe of man, but at the mercy and faithfulneſſe of God. Surely, I ſhall bee anſwered by and by: for I have the ſcope and end of the promiſe on my ſide. Faith had taken full meaſure of the promiſe by her owne want: and therefore our Saviour ſends her away with the admiration at her faith. Oh! let us thus duly apply our ſoules to the ſeale of the promiſe, and it ſhall leave behinde it the ſtamp of all that vertue and fulneſſe which God hath put into it. A baſe heart not concurring with God in this largeneſſe of his promiſes, is as hard wax put under a faire ſeale, which takes no impreſſion at all from it, though clapt on never ſo hard. But as the ſoftned wax taketh all the counterfeit of the ſeale, and expreſſeth them to the uttermoſt: Even ſo an heart rightly prepared, receives the print of the ſeale, letter for letter, face for face, yea, grace for grace. Faith is both hand and hammer to drive the naile of the promiſe, given by one Paſtor, the Lord Jeſus, up to the head. This for the former queſtion. Now I come to the latter, how this duty may be practiſed.

Matth.15.

Simile.

Eccleſ.12.

Queſt.2. How ſhall we practiſe this duty?

And for anſwer to that, this I ſay, Wee muſt know, that the life of faith in all beleevers, reſts upon ſuch promiſes as concerne their condition, be it what it will be; knowing that there are ſpeciall ones given us by God (as *Peter* ſpeakes, Chap.1. and verſe 3. of his ſecond Epiſtle) for our ſupply in all needs. The ſoule then doth not fooliſhly miſapply theſe, but gathers them up, ſtores them like a wiſe Steward, both old and new, that ſhe may bring them forth in due ſeaſon; as a man would every morning put on the apparell of that day for his uſe and comfort. And this is her putting on the Lord Jeſus, who firſt hath taken meaſure of her needs, and then offers himſelfe in his promiſes and ordinances, Word, Sacrament, Prayer, and faſting, and the like, to fit her, as her cloathes doe her body. Some of theſe I have already toucht in one of the Uſes before, upon the Doctrine of *Naamans* obedience. A few more I will adde now, not preſſing the uſe of them, but barely preſenting them to your view. Sometime thy baſe heart

Rom.13.ult.

Anſ. diverſly.

feeles

feeles old guilt and accuſation of conſcience to returne, after mercy taſted, and hope of victory enjoyed. But why is this? Surely, that hereby the work of Selfe-deniall might be perfected in thee, and ſinne might be knowne to be out of meaſure ſinfull, that it might bee more abhorred, and ſtronger faith in pardon and purging thereof improved. Claſp upon the Word for it, I am he who will heale all thy rebellions for my name ſake, both new and old: It is according to a promiſe, that the Lord ſhould leave none of thy corruptions unſubdued. Who is a God like unto our God (who forgiveth iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin, (marke how many words he uſeth to include all ſin whatſoever, both of nature and courſe; yea, ſinnes after the light of the Goſpel embraced:) And I create the fruit of the lippes, peace, and I will heale him. I have ſeene his rebellions, and ſmote him, hid me and was angry, and he went on in the frowardneſſe of his owne heart. But I will heale him, and reſtore comfort unto him. Againe, perhaps thy ſoule meets with ſome eclipſe of Gods preſence, and forſakes me, ſo that I live in darkneſſe, and walke up and downe with a dead heart, without feeling. Well, if it be by reaſon of ſome apparant ſinne againſt conſcience, returne with a broken heart by a promiſe to God, Jer. 3. 1. A man having divorced an Adultreſſe, will not returne to her: But if thou wilt returne to me, I will not reject thee. Returne, O yee backſliding people, and I will have mercy upon you, and heale all your iniquities. But if the Lord bee departed otherwiſe, know it is not to forſake for ever. For a moment I was angry, Eſay 54. But with everlaſting compaſſion I will embrace thee. And in the Pſalme 55. The Lord will not leave his people for ever.

1. In the returne of guile, ſtrength of ſin, cuſtome, preſence of it.

Mica ult.

Eſay 57.

2. In the deadneſſe & hardneſſe of heart.

Sometime the ſoule is afraid ſhe ſhall fall into ſome ſcandall, and never perſevere: but he who hath delivered, will deliver from every evil way and work: He wil preſerve the ſouls of his Saints: he wil write his law in their heart, they ſhall not depart from his feare: I am perſwaded nothing ſhall ſeparate, &c. He is faithfull who hath promiſed. Sometime ſickneſſe, poverty, debt diſquiets, and how then? In ſix troubles he will keepe thee, and in the ſeaventh, that it ſhall not oppreſſe. Hee put his hand under my head, and will make my bed in ſickneſſe; when I was weake, the Lord holpe me. Againe, the ſoule complaines, But I have enemies. Well, but if thy wayes pleaſe the Lord, he can make them thy friends: If not, though an Army of them compaſſe mee about, yet will I not be afraid. But perhaps friends faile, and turne unfaithfull? Well, yet *Mica* 7. When I dare truſt no friend nor wife, I dare truſt the Lord. When my father and mother forſooke me, but the Lord took me up. Can a mother forſake the childe of her wombe? Yet will not the Lord. He will ſuſtaine and redeeme thee: In all their afflictions hee was afflicted, Eſay 63. 9. Oh! but they proſper, and I decay: They beare all the ſtroke, and my cauſe is ſentenced. Stay a while, and their green Bay tree ſhall wither. True it is, it is long firſt. But fret not thy ſelfe, roll thy way on Jehova, and be doing good, and hee will effect it. Hee will bring forth thy righteouſneſſe as the morning: Hee will plead thy cauſe, Mica 7. When there is caſting down, thou ſhalt ſee a lifting up, and hee ſhall ſave the humble perſon, But thou

3. Fear of falling into ſome ſcandall, and not perſevering.

4. Sickneſſe, debt, enemies, unfaithfull friends, and the like.

Pſal. 73.
Pſal. 37. 6.

Job. 22. 29.

2 Kings

5. When prayer is not heard.

Psal.23.3.

Habak.3.

6. Temptations and fierce assaults of Satan. Matth.5.12. 1 Pet.4.

Matth.24.

Luke 22.31

Esay 30.

Matth.18. John 13.ult. Mica 7.8.

2 Cor.15.

thou wilt say, My prayers be not heard. Not presently: but it is, that thou mightst pray oftner, and earnestlier, that so God may deliver thee from that thou feareſt, and his grace may bee sufficient for thee. Thou wilt still object, My troubles are as no bodies, secret and stinging, unknowne to any. But not unto the Lord, whose eyes are in every corner of the earth, and knows the heart and reynes; yea, the most hidden sorrowes, that he may be strong with the weak and contrite ones: Oh! but I am darke for lack of faith. Yet let him that is in darkneſſe, and seeth no light, trust upon God, Esay 50. But I want meanes. The Lord is my support, leads me to the pastures and streames; and when I am lost, yet sustaines me: So that although the Olive and Vine should faile, though there should be no Calfe in the stall, nor Sheep in the flocke, yet will I make the Lord my salvation. But my temptations and assaults by Satan are fierce, to Atheisme, to deny providence, the Scriptures, and such like molestings. It they be tedious they shall bee short, and faith shall quench the most fiery darts.

But he stirres up his instruments to vex and pursue. Well, they may cast thee into prison tenne dayes, but hold out, and I will give thee a Crowne of life. Gods hook is in their nostrills. Blessed art thou when thou art persecuted for the name of Christ: The Spirit of glory shall rest upon thee. Fear not man, whose breath is in his nostrills, Esay 40.7. But I feare evill times will plucke me from my stedfastneſſe. No: Thousands and tenne thousands shall fall on both sides, but thou shalt goe free in the midst. If possible the Elect should be deceived: But its not possible: I have prai'd for thee that thy faith faile not. The just shall have a shining light upon their pathes. Oh! but perhaps I am in perplexing straits what course to take. Well, but a voice shal be behind thee, and say, This is the way walke in it! Oh but my sorrowes are the miseries of the Church! The gates of hell shall not prevaile against her. Be of good courage, I have overcome the world. The ship that Christ is in, cannot be drowned; He will rebuke the waves, and cause a calme. Rejoyce not over me, O mine enemy, for when I am down, I shall rise: Christ hath naild my enemies to his crosse, led captivity captive. Esay 26.1. Salvation hath the Lord set for walls and bulwarks. Esay 13.5. God will defend Jerusalem. Light is sowne for the Righteous: Beare the yoke, because thou hast sinned, and the Lord shall breake the decree, Mica last, and tread them as mire in the streets. In the meane time, Jer.46. I will correct them in measure: and Esay 28. Did I correct him, as I corrected them who afflicted him? No, but in measure. But how shall I doe when the King of feares comes? The sting of death is sin, which being taken out, thou shalt triumph, O death where is thy sting? But I have poore children to provide for! Well, Exod.20. The Lord shewes mercy to thousands of them that love him: And, the children of the righteous inherit the earth, Psal.25. But when I am dead, what shall become of me? Take no thought, Esay 57. They shall rest in their graves, perfumed and softned by the grave of Christ, and be purged by it from corruption. Their names shall be sweet on earth, as the pretious ointment: And their soules shall reigne with God in full perfection of happi-

happineſſe, above ſinne, ſorrow and all enemies, till it ſhall joine with the beloved body againe at the day of Chriſt, to enjoy in heaven perfect conſummation. Theſe and ſuch like promiſes, let every poore ſoule cull out for herſelfe, out of the treaſury of the Scriptures, and enlarge them to her owne uſe, that it may goe well with her, and that the promiſes may be beleeved according to their extent; for this is the miſery of the ſoule, that God hath fulneſſe for her in his promiſes, but ſhee will not ſee it, acknowledge it, embrace it, accommodate it, but let them lye ruſting there, without regard, as men uſe to ſuffer their Armour to doe, becauſe they have no uſe of it. Thus much ſhall ſerve for a direction in this kinde, and for this Uſe, as alſo for the whole Doctrine, and former part of this verſe, containing *Naamans* obedience.

The laſt generall. His ſucceſſe. Three things in it.

Now I come to the latter part of the verſe, which containes the immediate ſucceſſe of his waſhing: And that is firſt the expreſſion: *That his fleſh came againe &c.* Secondly, the cure it ſelfe: *He was cleane:* And thirdly, now we heare no more of his former diſtempers, all are vaniſht and waſht away with his leprous skin, in Jorden. Theſe points I note here: As for the remoter conſequences following upon this cure, afterward I ſhall come to them in the next verſe. The cure then of *Naaman*, is that which in theſe latter words is to be conſidered; and firſt, of the holy Ghoſt his expreſſion: *His fleſh came againe as the fleſh of a little childe* (for of this I will ſay ſomewhat) ere I come to the main point. Many words had been uſed to expreſſe *Naaman* his obedience, how punctuall it was; and now as many are uſed to expreſſe the cure, how entire and perfect it was: as if God would not come ſhort of him, but be as punctuall in full curing of him, as hee had been in cloſe obeying God. Who doubts of the perfect cure of ſuch a Leper, as was made of a ſcurvie, loathſome, naſty skin, like the skin of a little childe, that is, as whole as he was borne? So that it notes a perfect reſtitution of *Naaman* to his former integrity of ſoundneſſe. Mens remedies are alway lame ones, if they heale one way, they hurt another. We uſe to ſay of Phyſicall courſes, purgings, bleedings, as they helpe in point of preſent cure, and remove preſent death and danger, ſo yet they leave a touch upon the body afterward, and leave either ſome other aile behinde, or elſe take away ſtrength, abate the ſpirits, or other like: and all to ſhew us that mans medicines are like himſelfe, and that is, crazie, doubtfull and dangerous: ſo that, not long after, the ſame or worſe maladies and diſeaſes follow; but to bee ſure, death. Hence aroſe that proverbe, Many Remedies are worſe then the diſeaſes themſelves. And all commodities in this life carry inconveniencies after them. Perhaps they are one way beneficiall, and two wayes prejudiciall. But Gods cures are like himſelfe, perfect, intire, and abſolute. No more leproſie is heard of, to grow upon *Naamans* skin, after God had done with him: he came no more into the hands of other Phyſitians, through relapſe into the old diſtemper. No man can finde out any thing after God. But hee can finde out ſundry failings after men when they have done their beſt. I will not inſiſt upon it; onely it may briefly teach us theſe two *Items*:

1. The expreſſion.

Gods remedies are perfect ones: But mens are lame and crazie.

Eccleſ. 7. 14.

First,

2 Kings

We muſt turn our doting eye from the perfection of the creature.

First, to turne our doting eyes from the perfection of any creature here, by reaſon of thoſe crackes and flawes which are in the beſt of them. What petty Deities and Idols are Phyſitians eſteemed among carnall people, for their skill in curing diſeaſes, eſpecially if their gift be any more then ordinary? Say it be but in any one kinde, or diſeaſe, as a Conſumption, Feaver, Dropſie, or the like, eſpecially, if (when others have given over the cure as deſperate) they take it in hand, and effect it? What money, what honour is thought enough to requite a man? Nay, as Patients teach them, ſo, how doe Phyſitians learne to dote upon themſelves? And how will they boaſt themſelves like petty Kings of their ſuppoſed skill? Oh! if this medicine (ſaith one) wil not heale him, nothing in the world will doe him good. And another, I healed him (ſaith he) when no other could turne his hand to it. And, I will pawne all I have upon my skill, that I heale him. Could God himſelfe ſpeake any more? Let me not bee thought to ſpeake diſdainfully againſt the perſons of any learned or religious Phyſitians, much leſſe their profeſſion, both which I honour, and am bound to doe while I live, for the good received from them, through Providence. And I know many there are in this kinde, eminently religious, and well deſerving: But onely (by ſo juſt occaſion) one *Item* I would give to Phyſitians, and another to Patients. To the former, this, That as they are converſant moſt what about ſearching out naturall cauſes, ſymptomes and cures of diſeaſes: So, no profeſſion is more ſubject to Atheiſme and prophaneneſſe, then ſuch, except the Lord ſubdue and captivate their ſpirits and skill, under his Providence, making them ſervants to attend it for the good of ſuch as to whom God hath appointed life by meanes, and no otherwiſe. For why? Who knowes not but many recover of diſeaſes (in the judgement of Phyſitians) incurable? And how many there are in whom nothing ſave ſafety appears, who yet in the midſt of the Phyſitians ſecurity, dye inſtantly? All to ſhew, that the paſſages of life and death are not in mans hand, but in the Lords; who oft-times delights to blind-fold the wiſe and prudent in their own ſenſe, and to doe good by thoſe who are of meaner parts? Not but that the parts of learned Phyſitians are to bee eſteemed (who cannot be too well parted, ſince they deale in ſo pretious a ſubject, as the life of the moſt excellent creature, man) but that with parts, they joyne a God, adore him, and ſet him up in their ſouls as ſupreame and chiefe, treading themſelves under feet, in point of that Royall prerogative of ſaving life.

Phyſitians muſt know themſelves only inſtruments of Providence, for ſuch as God will heal.

Alas! how doth the Lord humble our confidence daily, when hee croſſeth our conjectures, and betrayes our folly both in our hopes of recovery, when there is none, and in our deſpaires, when there is no cauſe? What mortall man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, would not here ſubmit and lay downe his weapons at the feet of the Lord of life and death, confeſſing himſelfe a foole, and that both in his owne caſe and others, the Lord may and doth often conceale from him the reall cauſe and truth of Diſeaſes? The holy Prophet *Eliſha*, led by a Divine and miraculous Spirit, humbly profeſſed it to *Gehazi*, in the womans caſe who came for her dead childe. The Lord (ſaith hee) hath

2 Kings 4. 27.

hath hidden it from me? And ſhall not we ſay ſo, who are poore ſilly ones to him, even as a baſe ignorant empiricke is to us, and much more? So for people, how inſolent are they in this kinde? Robbing God of his honour, and ſetting up baſe man in his throne. Oh (ſaith one) ſuch a Phyſitian let me have, or let ſuch a ſickeman have, and upon my life he will heale him! Let the upper milſtone runne upon the nether, and I warrant your corne betweene will be grown? What? Is there no more in it then ſo? Is there no God? Oh (cry you mercy ſaith one) I forgot that, now I ſpeake as a man! Nay, rather like an Atheiſt: and ſo let a Phyſitian whom they like, viſit them, his comming is to them as good a medicine, as the phyſicke he brings! If Phyſitians would abhorre, and tremble at ſuch Patients, and Patients ſuch Phyſitians (mules ſcratching each others itch) they would learne more humility, and divinity. Honour the Phyſitian, and ſpare not, ſo thou give him no more then is due to an inſtrument. Let him and thou ſanctifie both phyſicke and receits by prayer and faith, and behold it as a ſervant, not as a God, to put confidence in, and then all is well.

People very fond in magnifying the outward cauſe, and neglecting God.

Some report of that good King of Swedes, that he thought his life was but ſhort, becauſe men did ſo deifie him, (but that was not all) much more, I thinke, ſhould we with *Elihu* tremble to give titles of God to men, leſt our Maker ſhould deſtroy us: for Eſay 42. He will not give his glory to another. In a word to uſe Saint *Iames* his ſtile, you ought to take God with you, ſaying, If God will bleſſe it, it ſhall heale: Alas its but a patcht remedy when it is at beſt; howbeit its in Gods hands to bleſſe or croſſe it. Enough of this: The like counſell take we from hence, touching all other earthly creatures, or contentments therein. Our life it ſelfe, our ſtrength, our wealth, wit, experience, friends, parts, bravery in fare, dwelling, retinue, and any other bleſſing, either for neceſſity or comfort: What one is there of all theſe, but hath in it one way, as great a miſery, as another way an happineſſe? So that (ſetting aſide the ſobriety of heart, making it, as it is, pure to the pure:) what good is in it, which in ſome other reſpect is not requited as much with an evill? As that great man, who threw his Diademe (or Kingly wreath) on the ground, ſaying; If a Subject knew what was wrapt up in it, he would not ſtoop to take it up, to have it. What carking care goeth with riches? A poore Cobler very merry in his ſongs, while poore, having a bagge of money caſt into his puy, ceaſed to ſing. At laſt, he that threw it him in, came and askt him, why he was ſo ſad all on the ſudden? He ſuſpecting who it was threw him back his bagge, and bid him take it; for he could never bee merry with it. Doe I inferre hereby, that Gods bleſſings are to bee deſpiſed? No: But that God hath left a cracke in the beſt of them, in all of them; to teach poore man to Idolize none of them, but to ſet his heart upon better things. Race is not alway to the ſwift, nor wealth to the wiſe, nor battell to the ſtrong, ſaith Eccleſ. How many mens wealth, by their ſinne, is given them, as the bane of them that have it? What prophaneneſſe, pride, boaſting, ſcorne, miſchiefe, doe they by it? How many poore mens bodies know the diſeaſes of full diet? I might bee endleſſe, but I ceaſe. In Gods feare, look upon the wormes that

Job. 31.
Jam. 1.

Eccleſ. 9. 11.

2 Kings

that breed in our Manna; behold the defect, the ſting, the penalty, the vanity of the creature; loath exceſſe in it, getting, having, forgoing: Set thine heart ſolidly upon perfection: thoſe dainties that have no ſurfet: that portion which hath no ſorrow with it: Grace and favour of God, which hath no lacke: that excellent cure of faith and the new creature, which is Gods cure, which reſtores the leprous ſoule to ſuch a ſmoothneſſe as it was firſt created with, nay much better: Every gift of God is perfect, ſaith *Iames* 1.6. like himſelfe. Be in love with Gods remedies, a quiet, humble, patient heart under thy afflictions, which are not onely not worſe then the diſeaſes, but better then proſperity it ſelfe; ſuch as reſtore the ſoule to ſuch a cure, as is not ſubject to any future decay or relapſe. So much for this.

Iam. 1.16.

2 Branch. God overrules the ſilly creature to bee the inſtrument of working great effects.

Another thing here I obſerve, How marvellous and ſoveraigne an effect the Lord of this water of Jorden workes by the ſilly creature: The fleſh of *Naaman* (ſaith the Text) being waſht in Jorden, becomes as the fleſh of a little childe. Not ſurely by any inherent quality therein by nature, but by the concurrence, or rather over-ruling power of Almighty God, uſing them to be inſtrumentall in this kinde, for the ſetling *Naamans* faith thereby, as by a ſigne, q. d. As ſurely as thou in obedience of faith, ſhalt waſh, ſo ſurely ſhalt thou be cleanſed. Means of an unproportioned ſtrength to effect a ſupernaturall effect, may yet be relied upon as Gods, when any direct word is given us to warrant them. Learne then firſt (by the law of contraries) that all meanes uſed by man, without a warranting word, are juſtly to be ſuſpected, as not proceeding from God, but from another principle juſtly permitted by God, to worke for the deluding of unbeleevers, who will not embrace the truth revealed, but detaine it in unrighteouſneſſe. And, let the colours of men be never ſo holy, in pretence of Religion, yet God is not with them: As well thoſe Exorciſts of the Jewes, taking upon them the diſpoſſeſſing of Divels, without ground, Acts 19.13. As the Mayd or Pythoniſſe, that gat her Maſters great gaine by her divinations, Acts 16.16. was from Satan. Good Witches and bad differ in colour, but not in Divelliſhneſſe. Papiſts their exorciſmes and Spelles, or charmes, working by words of Saint *Iohns* Goſpel, or any devout prayers, or other ſentences of Scripture, becauſe they have in them no ſuch naturall operation to produce ſuch effects, as to heale Agues, or other like diſeaſes, nor yet are determined by any expreſſe word of God to any ſuch uſe or end; are as bad as the Medicines or Charmes applied by good Witches for the cure of man or beaſt. For why? Naturall things they are not: Divinely ſupernaturall they are not: Diabolicall therefore they muſt needs bee. Wee muſt have a word for it to enable bare dead ſentences of Scripture ſo and ſo, by ſuch, at ſuch a time, in ſuch a manner, to ſuch diſeaſed men, or cattell applied, to effect ſuch a cure on Gods name, elſe though the words be good, yet the Charme is never the better, but much worſe. Better were it, and leſſe ſinfull for ſuch to uſe prophane, graceleſſe words, then holy, to ſo curſed an end: And although the materiall end be good, to cure a malady, yet the meanes are Divelliſh limitations of unlikely agents, muſt bee warranted, elſe their device is from man by Satan.

All Unproportioned meanes uſed by men, without the Word, for effecting of great workes, are evill, and to be abhorred.

Popiſh Miracles and cures what to bee thought of.

Charmes and ſpells of good Witches to bee condemned.

Indeed

Indeed men looke ſo much at the apparant ſuppoſed good of things, to reſtore things loſt, or the like, that it tickles and withdrawes them from the ſuſpicion of the forked hooke which lies covered under the baite. Oh! (ſay they) I warrant you, the Divell is a murtherer from the beginning, and doth no man good, but hurt: But there is a white Divell like an Angell of light, as well as a blacke one, with horns & hoofs, and the former of the two is the more ſly and dangerous. The Divell ſpake good truthes when he confeſſed Chriſt, and the Apoſtles that he might overthrow him by his lying witneſſe, and conveighes double poiſon hereby, which elſe he could not. For what elſe doth he by ſuch wiles and tricks, ſave draw the ſpirits of curious and diſtruſtfull men to wofull Idolatry? To put confidence in him under a Witch, to expect ſucceſſe from a curſed Principle, to aſcribe that glory which belongs to God alone, to baſe means, which all are reduced to the Divell their firſt mover. Satan knowes he gaines more this way, then he loſeth by the truth he ſpeaks, or the good which followes. He denies himſelfe at no time, ſave for wicked ends. Beware therefore: Dare not to confound thoſe excellent wayes of God in his power, providence and mercy to his creature, with the Satanicall and Sorcerers courſes of prophane beaſts. As for thoſe miraculous operations of God in his Church throughout all ages of the Old Teſtament, in the poole Siloam, and the gift of ejecting Satan by ſome certaine perſons, there was enough to prove that they were from God, for the confirmation of Truth, the ſtrengthening of Faith, & the drawing of Proſelites. But as for all the other, the Lord juſtly ſuffers Satan to deceive ſuch as deceive themſelves firſt, and reject the truth, as we ſee in *Saul*, Eſay 8.19. Should the living goe to the dead, and to them that whiſper out of the earth, (Geomanticks:) No, but to the Law, and to the Teſtimony, if that favour not, there is no wiſdome in them, ſave that which Saint *James* calls from beneath, and diveliſh. A moſt wofull thing, that in a land where the Goſpell hath beene preached this eighty yeares, ſuch abominations ſhould ſwarme, and that with impunity, yea in ſome caſes (which I name not) with Apology. God amend it! So much for this Branch.

John 5.4. Matth. 12.27.

1 Sam. 28.6.7. Jam. 3.15.

Secondly, hence acknowledge the infinite goodneſſe of God in deviſing ſuch aide and ſuccour to poore creatures both their bodies and ſoules for the expreſſing of his tender mercies to us in this infirmity of our fleſh. That by a word ſpeaking he ſhould create the fruit of the lippes, even peace, Eſay 57. by the Miniſtery of a ſinfull man, (further off from power to convert a ſoule, then Jorden to heale a leper) and beget it to a lively hope and immortality and glory. That thereby the word preached ſhould carry with it the working of faith and regeneration. As the Lord Jeſus his own bleſſed words effected miracles in the ſpeaking, cauſing the dead to ariſe, the lepers to be cleanſed, the deafe to heare: So the words of his Miniſters by the ſame vertue from him, ſhould doe greater things then theſe, even by inſtruments moſt weake, how admirable is it? To the end that our faith might not ſtand in man, but in God! That the deadly ſoule leproſie (worſe then *Naamans* bodily) of infidelity, pride, hypocriſie, ſelfe, ſhould be waſht

Goodneſſe of God in uſing weake and poore things, to eff & great, is much to be admired.

Marke ult.

2 Cor 4.7.

2 Kings

all away by the water of Baptiſme through the word of the Covenant, to which its annexed in all beleevers, and theſe ſhall become ſealing ordinances to ratifie the truth of regeneration to the ſoule, and to confer the nouriſhing power of the Spirit unto life eternall, how admirable is it? It is the omnipotent power of God which cauſeth it, which ſeparates the ſilly creature of water, bread and wine for the preſent, from common uſe, takes off the baſe outſide of it, caſts an honourable mantle over it, appropriates it, to holy, ſolemne and divine, uſe and ſervice, unites the Lord Jeſus himſelfe with his whole merit and efficacy to it, and all to effect this end, to convey the Lord Jeſus into the ſoule of the Beleever; aſſuring it by vertue of this ſealing ordinance, that as verily as the body by vertue of appetite eates and drinkes the creatures, ſo truly doth the ſoule take and eat the body and bloud of Chriſt to the ſouls nouriſhment by Gods command and promiſe. This is a myſtery: and it ſhould teach us, that if God have aſſumed ſuch poor creatures ſacramentally into the partakerſhip of himſelfe, therefore to take heed leſt we vilifie the outward ordinance (as pretending all the power to be from Chriſt) but to acknowledge each part thereof to bee from him, and one as true (though not as effectuall) a part as the other. Ye parents make not Baptiſme a common thing, make not ſo ſolemne a thing to wait upon your leaſure and complements, when all your trinkets are ready, then carry your childe to the Sacrament. No, let your bables attend it, not it them. Deſpiſe it not for the outſide, there is a bleſſing in it, and under the baſeneſſe of elements lies hidden a world of worth and honour. And you (my brethren the people) run not out from it ſo ſoon as the word is preached, as if you diſcerned no Chriſt in and under it annexed to it for your owne ſpeciall uſe and good. I tell thee thoſe ſilly creatures are eſſentiall parts of the Sacrament, as well as the grace and ordinances of God, to bee reverenced (though I ſay not with our own invented, yet) with that eſteeme with which God hath honoured them, *viz.* to be channells and conveiors of that grace of the Lord Jeſus for life and ſupport; elſe would he not have graced Sacraments with the like honor to Faith, Except a man be borne of water and the Spirit, and, He that beleeves and is baptiſed, ſhall be ſaved. God can worke without them when they cannot bee had, but when they may, he will have them ſhare in point of honour with the graces ſealed, from which they cannot be ſevered, nor may be rent. So much for this ſecond Uſe.

Sacraments how divinely appropriated to ſeale up to the ſoule ſtrong aſſurance of ſalvation.

Therefore not to be uſed as common things.

John 3.3.4. Marke ult.

And laſtly, although I doe not here equall Jordens waters to a Sacrament, nor dare I call it a type of Baptiſme, yet is there a cleere and lively reſemblance thereof in it. I ſpeake not this to teach any to uſe their wits boldly, to allegorize every thing as ſome have done. In this, its ſafeſt for us to captive our wiſdome to God, to bee no wiſer then himſelfe; but where he pleaſes to expreſſe alluſions there to follow with ſobriety. As in the allegory, Gal. 3. end. of Sina and Jeruſalem, to typifie the nature of bondage, and of freedome. So, that of *Noah's* flood, which *Peter*, Epiſt. 1. Cap. 3. 21. tells us is ſemblable to Baptiſme: Elſe its beſt for us to forbeare types, only we may make reſemblances: As here, this healing of *Naaman* by Jorden, and expreſſing

Jordens waters a reſemblance of baptiſme.

ſing of it by the fleſh of a childe, teaches us thus much: That the Lord who occaſionally uſed this water to ſuch an end, as to cure an incurable leproſie of an aliant and ſtranger from the Common-wealth of Iſrael, doth aſſure us that much more by Baptiſme, (as by an appointed and ſetled ſealing way) he is able to heale the fretting leproſie of ſinne and curſe in all his beleeving ones, and ſeale the ſoule of ſuch a one through the faith of the word to a true ingrafting into Chriſt, and the new Birth. *Conſtantine* the great and good Emperour being a leper, and told that nothing elſe could heale him, ſave bathing of his body in the bloud of infants ript out of their mothers wombe, abhorred the ſpeech of it, as counting the remedy worſe then the diſeaſe: That which hee did mercifully in forbearing, doe thou religiouſly in embracing. The bloud and water flowing out of the pierced ſides of the Lord Jeſus, and waſhing thy ſoul by faith ſacramentally, is only able to heal thy leproſie, & to make ſo perfect a cure as ſhall never need to be repeated. *Naaman* and thou need nevere be waſhed the ſecond time, if once throughly cured; and in truth, it was this bloud which made *Naamans* cure ſo perfect. Apply thy ſoule to it therefore, to make a perfect cure in it, better then all thine owne patcht and halfe cures. Looke not at the outward water alone, looke at the power and vertue of him whoſe bloud onely can heale both the water from her curſed barrenneſſe, to make it fruitfull and ſeaſonable ſeed of life; and thy ſoule by water, from guilt, power, and eternall curſe due unto it. Chriſt in the water, is the power of it, one droppe of his ſides iſſuing out water and bloud, is the efficacy of the Sacraments: Mix all with faith to cleanſe thy ſoul, to purge thy leproſie, its ſhed to thine hand, and powred out by himſelfe moſt willingly for thee: If thou refuſe it thou art guilty of ſhedding it, but, not by beleeving and applying it. No legall cleanſings of the leper by *Aaron* can equall it; he ſprinkled the bloud and aſhes of a Cow, Chriſt ſprinkles with his owne; he often, Chriſt once for ever; he imperfectly, ſo that the leproſie might returne, Chriſt fully, never to returne. If then the bloud of an heifer could purge by ceremony a polluted body, how much more ſhall this bloud of the eternall Covenant cleanſe thy conſcience from dead workes, to ſerve the living God? But beware thou do not goe and waſh in Jorden with leſſer faith then *Naaman* did; doe as much for thy ſoule, as he for his body, elſe thou ſeparateſt the things which God hath united, and deſtroyeſt the power of the Sacrament and the purpoſe of God for thy regeneration; yea, the very creature of water ſhall riſe up in judgement againſt thee in the day of judgement, for that it cloſed with Chriſt inſeparably in his Ordinance; but thou moſt prophanely didſt warpe from him by thy unbeleefe. So much alſo for this third Branch, and for the ſecond Doctrine, and ſo for this Lecture. Let us pray, &c.

Affectation to allegorize the Scriptures a dangerous courſe.

Numb. 19. 4.

Heb. 8. 15.

THE ONE AND TWENTIETH Lecture continued upon the 14. VERSE.

VERSE XIV.

Then Naaman went downe and waſhed himſelfe ſeven times in Iordan, and behold his fleſh came againe, as the fleſh of a little child, and hee was cleane.
Then he returned, and ſtood before the man of God, &c.

The ſecond head. The cure of Naaman.

WEE noted (Brethren) two leſſer Obſervations in the end of the laſt Lecture, out of this laſt part of the verſe, *viz.* The ſucceſſe of *Naamans* obedience: Now, leaving them, and the expreſſion of the cure, wee come to the cure it ſelfe. *And* (ſaith the Text) *he was cleane.* No intermiſſion of time paſſed between his waſhing and cleanſing, both went inſeparably together. The maine point flowing hence, which we have reſerved to this Exerciſe, is: That Gods promiſes are alway as good in the performing as in the making, if not better: for ſo falles it out with *Naaman* here. The Propher promiſed him cure of his Leproſie by waſhing himſelfe: And lo, now he is as good as his word, he waſhes, and is cleane in body. This is as much as was promiſed. But moreover (as appeares by the ſequell) he proves a cleane ſoule alſo, and this was an over-plus to the promiſe. It is a light thing for the Lord to heale his body, except hee heale himſelfe: And in this reſpect I may well ſay, as I ſaid before, That Gods cures are perfect indeed; all perfect gifts are from above; and all that are from thence, are perfect to purpoſe. Ere I come to handle the point, this I would premiſe (Brethren) how fitly this point followes the other, to make the heart and life of a poore beleever comfortable. The former point told us, that promiſes muſt bee interpreted aright, and not miſtaken, not reſtrained, but beleeved according to the utmoſt extent of the promiſer. But then comes in a doubt, Though

I enlarge them in their full reach, yet God may reſtraine them to the ſhorteſt ſize. True, if thou ſtretch them upon thy carnall tentors. But take them according to the word (as indeed thou ſhalt not need to make them better then God hath made them) and then this point will tell thee to thy comfort, that God will performe whatſoever hath gone out of his mouth to the uttermoſt, nay perhaps caſt in ſuch an over-plus as was neither promiſed, nor looked for. The Text is preſident enough for it, if there were no more. So that even in the entry upon the point, we may ſet a ſtarre in the margent, (and for our better encouragement both to beleeve, and in beleeving to waite patiently) may ſay, theſe two points carry very ſweet newes from heaven to a poore empty and hungry ſoule, both that he will have it beleeve to the uttermoſt, and when ſhe hath ſo done, God hath in ſtore for her as much performance, yea, and much more then ſhee hath faith. But let us come to the point. The order I will obſerve in the point ſhall be this: Firſt, I will prove it by Scripture. Secondly, by reaſon. Thirdly, I will cleare a maine doubt about the Doctrine. And ſo laſtly come to the Uſes: and firſt of the firſt.

Doctrine. Gods performances alway as good, if not better then his promiſes.

Concerning which, this I may ſay, That the whole Booke of God, is nothing elſe, but a very Theatre and open Stage, wherein the Lord acts his part of performing of promiſes. And not ſo alone: But ſo curious the Spirit of enditing the word is in every Chapter and Verſe, leſt the reader ſhould ſpy any flaw or crack in the performance of promiſes; that it ſteppes out of his tracke oft-times to reconcile and equall each performance to her owne promiſe. And this both in the maine promiſe of Chriſts exhibition, and in all ſecondary promiſes, whether generall and concerning the ſoule of the whole Church and each member of that body; or perſonall and temporary promiſes, concerning this and that perſon: And the greater diſtance there ſeemed betweene making and keeping of promiſes, the more curious regard hath the Holy Ghoſt to expreſſe Gods keeping touch, when his time was come. For example, God had promiſed to *Abraham* that his ſeed ſhould be ſet free after it was a ſtranger in an heathen land for four hundred and thirty yeares, and ſo it fell out, when the time came that God delivered them, what ſaith the Text? That ſelfe ſame day of that terme expired, the Lord brought forth Iſrael with her armies: So in the Goſpell, marke how curious the Holy Ghoſt is in expreſſing of the faithfulnes of God in each paſſage of Chriſt, his nativity, his parentage, his dwelling, his perſon, life, betraying, paſſion, death, burial? Forty ſeverall times one or other of the Evangeliſts refer the paſſages that fell out, to the promiſes themſelves: That it might be fulfilled which was ſaid, And thou Bethlem are not the leaſt of the Cities of Juda: That it might be fulfilled, *Rachel* lamented for her children, and would not be comforted, &c. That it might bee fulfilled, Out of Egypt have I called my Sonne: He that ate with me in the diſh, he betraied me: And he was counted among tranſgreſſors: And upon my veſtures did they caſt lots: And he ſhall make his grave with the rich: And he ſhall be as one of no beauty, like a withered branch: with a great many more. Not ſo much as his riding to Jeruſalem is omitted,

Proofes and Inſtances.

Gen. 15. 13. Exod. 12. 41.

See throughout the Goſpell. Mat. 1, 2, &c.

Marke 15. 28.

Matth. 27. 35.

2 Kings

Matth.21.4.

Josh.21.45.

2 Cor.1.20.

Luke 1.45.

1 Tim.5.15.)

Phil.4.19.

2 Kings 3.11.

Matth.6.32.

Reason 1. Because he is Jehovah.

Gen.17.1. Exod.6.3.

ted, Behold thy King commeth, lowly and meeke, riding upon an Asse, the sole of an Asse. Why is all this? To let us to understand, that he who would be so punctuall in all petty passages belonging to the great promise of the Messia, would be as faithfull in performing all other promises consequent upon his merit and satisfaction. And the like speeches are used to this purpose in the personall promises made to the Patriarkes, as to *Abraham* concerning *Isaac*, to *Rebecca*, concerning the elder serving the younger, to *Iacob*, that God would be with him in his journey, and bring him backe, and deliver him from *Esau*: To the Church in the wilderneſse concerning the possession of Canaan, *Ioshua* tells them, after the conquest, nothing failed of any one particular promise, which God had made concerning the giving of the land of Canaan to the seed of *Iacob*. Infinite many more instances might be alledged, as the fulfilling of the seventy yeares captivity, and the returne of the Church backe againe to their City and Mountaine, as Esay 57.13. All being pledges put into one bosome, touching the maine fidelity of God, in making good the promised Seed and Messiah so oft made and renewed to *Adam*, *Abraham*, *David*, *Ahaz*, and his people, which though it were kept in the bowells of time for foure thousand yeares, yet at last, Gal.4.4. When the fulneſse of time was come, was accomplished. And hence all other promises tooke their originall, and derived their issue. So saith the Apostle, All the promises of God are in him Yea and Amen, to the praise of his glory; that is, firme and inrepealable. Thus saith *Elizebth* to *Mary*, A performance shall be from the Lord of whatsoever hath beene said unto his handmaid: Faithfull is he who hath promised, who will also fulfill it. The Lord is faithfull, Heb.6.10. and will not conceale the labour of your love. This is a faithfull saying, and by all meanes to be beleeved &c. endlesse it were to reckon up all; and as for the addition of the point, that sometimes he fulfills them for the better, we see what *Paul* saith, Our God is able to doe for us more then we can aske or think. When *Salomon* chose to aske a wise and understanding heart to goe in and out, lo (saith the Lord) I have given thee it, and moreover I have given thee such wealth, honour and wisdome, as never any had before, nor shall have after thee. And so saith Christ, Seek the Kingdome of Heaven and the righteousneſse of it, and other things shall be cast in. So that it was not *Naamans* case onely, but by consent of Scripture, we see that his particular case, is made the case of each beleever, more or lesse, so farre as is meet. This for proofes.

Reasons are: First, the name of Gods essence, Jehovah, argues that he performes all the promises which he makes. For as hee is an absolute and infinite being in himselfe, giving to all other depending creatures their beings: So by vertue hereof, he vouchsafes a being to all his promises, which are the most excellent parcells of all his Scriptures. He gives the like substance and beeing to all his commands, and threats, to all other sorts of truths, but especially to these, being his chiefe truths: And as he said to *Moses*, I was not knowne to them before the flood, nor to *Abraham* by any other name save *El-shaddi*, all sufficient, but not by the name of *Iehovah*; this name is a more re-

all

all name, and gives a reality to my promiſes, and cauſes me to performe them: So now may we ſay, I was not knowne by the name of the Father of Chriſt Jeſus in former times, as I am now; for in him I make good all my word, he hath ſealed up all my truthes, my love in him is attended with all my other attributes, wiſdome, juſtice and faithfulneſſe, all my ſtrength and power aſſiſts that, ſo that whatſoever I have promiſed, I will performe, for I can doe it, I will doe it, and I am true in promiſing, therefore I muſt fulfill it. God then is Jehovah, the being of all his promiſes, our God in Chriſt.

Reaſon 2. For his owne honour.

Second Reaſon. God is faithfull in performances, in reſpect of his owne honour. He knowes that except he ſhould keep touch with his Church, and maintaine the glory of his keeping promiſe with her, hee ſhould deſtroy the credit of his Miniſters: the faith of his elect, and in a word, the hope of drawing any out of the common courſe of the world, to the Kingdome of grace. So that his unfaithfulneſſe threatning utter ruine to the whole art and way of Religion, either in faith or obedience, and ſhaking the very pillars of the Churches confidence; it muſt needs ſtand the Lord in hand to ſee his promiſes fulfilled.

Reaſon 3. Becauſe whatſoever is in God, is eminently in him.

Thirdly, foraſmuch as whatſoever is in God, is eminently in him, and by way of excellence (as before I noted in the point of commands;) therefore his truth in fulfilling promiſes, muſt alſo be ſingular and eminent. It muſt become that excellency of his truth, not onely to content himſelfe with ſuch a performing as the poore creature can expect, and concur withall; but ſuch an one as is above whatſoever the ſoul can aske or imagine: that is, rather to be over, then under his promiſes, better rather then worſe, this makes much for the adoring of his faithfulneſſe, and the beleeving of his promiſes.

Reaſon. 4. For the ſtrengthning of his ſervants. 2 Tim. 1. 12.

Fourthly, the Lord doth thus for the continuall ſtrengthening of his poore ſervants in better and cloſer claſping to his promiſes: and that by daily experience growing in the ſoule hereby, it might come to this pitch to ſay, I know in whoſe lappe or boſome I have put my pledge, I know in whom I have beleeved: I goe not upon had I wiſt, but upon undeceivable grounds. Thus, as the wicked through unbeleefe withdraw themſelves more and more to perdition; ſo the faithfull follow faith to the preſerving of the ſoule; they grow more and more rooted therein by ſuch triall of faith, they grow from faith to faith, rooted and eſtabliſhed, and not eaſily puft off by every winde of error, feare, temptation; they grow from beleeving one to beleeve more, from generall promiſes, to ſpeciall, from ſpirituall, to temporall, from promiſes in peace, to promiſes in and under croſſes, darke ones, deep ones, long ones; ſo that no eſtate, ſervice, occaſion, triall, waxes ſtrange to them, but familiar, and at laſt the yoke of God waxes eaſie, and his burthen light.

Heb. 10. 38.

Rom. 1. 17. Eph. 3. 16, 17. Matth. 11. 29.

Reaſon 5. Becauſe his promiſes come from purpoſe of doing good.

Fifthly, becauſe the Lords performances (or purpoſes at leaſt to performe) are the cauſes in a ſort of his promiſes. Its not ſo with men. They promiſe apace, but their ſpirit being backward in love, and entire wel-wiſhing to the good of others, come ſhort of their owne promiſes. Now the Lord in his intention or purpoſe to doe good to his Church and People, doth thereby draw his heart to make promiſes, that

2 Kings

that ſo, the good things which he wiſheth them, may be preſented to them before hand; & they may know that in meer faithfulnes, he binds himſelf to them, not to ſtrengthen himſelfe, but their weakneſſe rather in beleeving. Now becauſe the Lord out of an Idea and foreſight of his owne free grace, purpoſing to doe good to his, doth breake into promiſes; thence it is that promiſes are eaſie to performe with him. Men are raſhly drawne either by their owne ſuddaine pangs or by others motion to make promiſes, not knowing their owne ſpirits, and ſcantlings of affection, and ſo in coole bloud they undoe that which in hot they made. But becauſe Gods purpoſes ſtrong and firme, cauſed him to promiſe, therefore the ſame Spirit moves him alſo to performe. Againe, though men meane well in promiſing, yet inability oftentimes cauſes them to breake againſt their wills; whereas in God, purpoſe of love, and power of hand to performe, are alway equall, ſo that nothing can come between barke and tree, nothing can ſet his promiſes and performances together by the eares. Let the reader looke back into the point of Faith, where I have mentioned abundance of excellent Attributes in God, every of which are objects of Faith, and means to ſtrengthen it, and eſpecially his faithfulneſſe.

Reaſon 6. Because he lookes not at us, but his owne bounty.

Sixtly, and laſtly, the Lord ſometimes performes his promiſes rather with the better then otherwiſe, becauſe he promiſeth not according to what the narrow necke or veſſell of the ſoule is capable of, but what his bountifull heart can beteame it: Promiſes would prove but barren and bare matters, if ſo be our bucket could reach their bottome. But ſince the Lord promiſes according to the extent of his owne bounty, therefore he perſormes ſo alſo, whether the ſoule conceive ſo or not. What heart can conceive the unſpeakable good things prepared by God for ſuch as love him? Eye hath not ſeene, eare hath not heard, nor hath it entred into mans heart to contain them: yet all theſe are incloſed in the promiſe, and though the ſoule at firſt obtaining of pardon, ſee not what God includes in it to be in time accompliſhed, but is glad of a preſent ſupply of her need; yet the Lord who gives his Chriſt (the knot of promiſes) all at once, is content to keepe touch with the ſoule, and in due time to reach her out, all ſorts of them according as her need calls for, in duties, in wants, in temptation, in conflict with her luſts, or in affliction: Then he makes Chriſt, Righteouſneſſe, to be Chriſt, Wiſdome, Sanctification and Redemption: The leſſe the ſoule looked for it, the welcommer it is when it comes. Its not ſo with baſe men. If the party promiſed unto, conceive not the extent of the promiſer, the promiſer thinkes he hath quit himſelfe well in concurring with the expectation of the other, although he ſhorten his owne intents. But this baſe falſhood of reſtraint is farre off from God, and therefore he performes that which often is unexpected, as well as what is. And ſo much ſhall ſerve for Reaſons. Now to the Limitations:

1 Cor.2.9.

1 Cor.1.30.

Limitations of the point.

And they are ſundry. Theſe three following may give a taſte of the reſt, which becauſe they availe much for the due qualifying of the Doctrine, therefore I will mention them, and the proper uſes flowing from them, and ſo proceed to the other uſes belonging to the Doctrine. The firſt limitation is, That God though he alway performe

forme his promiſe, yet not alway in that very kinde which the ſoule perhaps ſeekes and claimes. The ſoule lookes at one kinde, the Lord lookes at another: It is enough with him, that he alway keeps touch in one kinde or other, though he doe not fulfill it as the ſoule would. And good reaſon, ſince the ſcope of fulfilling a promiſe, being the ſpeciall good of the ſoule that beleeves it; and the Lord himſelfe being fitter to judge of that, then the ſoule it ſelfe can. Therefore it is meet that we leave it to him in what kinde he will heare and performe. We, in the meane time cannot be loſers, becauſe the Lord doth not neglect to heare us in our kinde, for lacke of love; but through abundance of wiſedome. If wee can beleeve, that the kinde which hee anſweres us, bee (queſtionleſſe) beſt for the preſent condition in which the ſoule ſtands; then may ſhee bee as well ſatisfied in Gods way, as her owne. For example: There is a promiſe, that if wee call upon God in the day of affliction, he will heare us, and we ſhall praiſe him. Upon this the ſoule under any yoke of body, or minde, ſues to God upon his promiſe, to eaſe that yoke, that ſhe may praiſe him. But the Lord, being wiſer then ſhe, holds on the yoke ſtill: howbeit he doth it, not as forgetfull of his promiſe; but becauſe he ſees there be other graces to be ſet on worke in the poore ſoule, as breaking of heart, patience, further faith, ſelfe-deniall, which would not worke kindly if the yoke were off. If he meant onely to exerciſe thankfulneſſe in the ſoule, he would deliver it: but he judgeth the other to be more uſefull for the preſent, and therefore chuſes a performance in his owne kinde, which ſhall bee an hundred fold more gaine to the ſoule then the other. *Paul* being ſorely buffeted, not for ſinne, but to prevent it, prayes inſtantly to God to remove it. The Lord ſeeing that performance not to be proper for the end of his buffeting, continues it; yet hee breakes not promiſe: for he miniſters grace ſufficient to uphold him under it. By this meanes he attaines his end, to humble *Paul*, and moreover teaches him to deſire to live under deſertion and infirmity, ſometimes, that ſo he might get that experience of Gods ſtrange upholding of him in the want of feeling, which before hee had found under feeling. By this meane (though irkſome to the fleſh to want the uſe of graces and gifts) the Lord traines him to a ſober uſe of his revelations; and to renounce himſelfe ſo farre under buffetings, as to chuſe rather to bee as the Lord would have him, then as himſelfe choſe to be.

God performs promiſes alway; yet not in that very kinde, which the ſoule expects. And why?

Pſal. 50. 15.

2 Cor. 12. 3 4.

Verſe 9.

The uſe of this qualification is this: Both to coole our ſpirit of ſelfe-love, which is ready to appoint God his way of performance: as alſo to teach us wiſedome to apply our ſelves to the beſt good of a performance, rather then to the performance it ſelfe, to aſcribe this honour to God, that he better knows how to make good a promiſe to us, then wee can chuſe. And therefore not by and by to cry out againſt God for not performing it, becauſe our turnes are not ſerved: But rather by our defeat, to ſearch into the cauſe, and to ſee whether God and we looke the ſame way or no: If we doe not, we may bee long enough ere we be ſatisfied, or honour God in his faithfulneſſe. If we will tie God to performe one promiſe, and the Lord meanes to performe another, we ſhall be farre to ſeeke. Say we therefore thus: Lord teach me to

The uſe of this limitation.

Gods people looke more at the good of a performance, then the bare performance of a promiſe.

2 Kings

to looke out what the promiſe is which thou aimeſt to make good. Faithfull, I am reſolved, thou art: but that ſtands not in ſerving my turne, but in ſerving thy ſelfe upon me. Since thou doeſt all things well, I doe but wait to ſee thy way, for it is beſt, and ſhall curb my ſpirit, and give me beſt content; becauſe it tends to make mee more experienced, more humble, and at laſt thankfull to thee for that good which thy ſelfe meantſt me, which is infinitely better then that which I fancied. So much for the firſt.

Limitation the ſecond. In generall promiſes to the Church, the time of performance muſt be left to God, and why.

The ſecond limitation may be this: In promiſes concerning the welfare of the Church in generall, except the Lord tye himſelfe punctually to a time of redreſſe or deliverance: we muſt conceive of Gods performances indefinitely without prefixing a time or period of our own: For in ſuch, it is enough for the quitting of Gods faithfulneſſe, that he performes really, although he leave the time when, to his owne wiſedome. We look that Gods love in hearing us for ſuch performances, ſhould trench upon his wiſe providence; but that ought not to be: In ſuch caſes it behoves us to diſtinguiſh upon promiſes. In ſuch as touch the ſoule and life of a beleever, uſually (except ſome ſpeciall thing hinder) the ſoules beleeving and the promiſes performance goe together: as, for the ſtrength againſt a luſt, for quickning up of any grace or gift, for ſanctifying of any ordinance. But not ſo in the publicke promiſes. The reaſon is, becauſe the Lord may have a predominant way of his owne to barre preſent performance. He doth neglect the ſpeciall good of them who pray for a more univerſall good of his owne; either becauſe the ſinnes of his enemies, by whom hee uſes to ſcourge his Church, are not come to the higheſt pitch, and ſo it will not bee moſt for his glory, to puniſh or ſuppreſſe them yet: or becauſe the provocations of his Church, and the ſins thereof, are not yet purged throughly, nor brought to the loweſt point: Theſe reſpects may hinder ſpeciall reliefe of ſome preſent miſeries, reſtraints and perſecutions of his people. There is (wee ſay) in the motion of every planet, a ſtraight motion comming from the Planet herſelf, and a backward motion of the firſt mover: So is it here, the motion of a promiſe is retrograded and retarded by the wiſedome of the firſt mover. The grand promiſe of the Lord Jeſus his incarnation, was indefinite, and in the boſome of God, when to fulfill it: one thouſand, two or three thouſand might have brought it forth as well as foure; yet providence reſerved it to the end of the fourth thouſand: And when that fulneſſe was come, nothing could ſtop the fulfilling of that, which yet before that time, no prayers, no expectation of the Church could haſten: Then, and not till then, he that would come, came, and tarried not. So alſo, wee that live in this age, conceive our ſelves to be pitcht under the fourth viall, under which wee are warranted to wait for the revealing of Gods wrath, and the ruine of the Beaſt. But for us hereupon to limit God to owne time and period, ſeaven, or ten, or fifteene yeares: (whatſoever we may ſuppoſe by probabilities) and to determine God to our own ſeaſon, is moſt bold and preſumptuous: For God hath as well a way of his revenge and ſcourging of particular Churches, for their infidelity and unfruitfulneſſe, as he hath of fulfilling his maine promiſe. Sure we are,

See Gen. 15. 16.

Gal. 4. 4.

Inſtances of the point.

are, his Word will prove true within the Terme of this Viall: But to bound the ſpace and duration of it, we may not. That the Jew ſhall be called, and the Goſpel generally preached ere the end come, and that the Lord Jeſus ſhall even in this world expreſſe himſelfe to be the Lord and King of his Church, and ſet up his Throne viſibly upon their reall ruines, who (not waning braines) can or dare deny it? And yet who (if he have braines) dare punctually determine it within ſo or ſo many yeares.

The uſe of this qualification is moſt pretious and weighty, *viz.* That in our prayers and ſervices of the time, be they ordinary or extraordinary, wee laſh not out through our ungrounded zeale and paſſions, to preſſe the Lord to our time, in redreſſing the miſeries of his Church, in puniſhing his enemies, reforming abuſes, or reſtoring comforts to her mourners. Slacken no whit of thy zeale, but let it ſtill be carried within bounds, and goe even pace with Gods time, and be limited by that condition. And moreover, let it curb our querulous and diſcontented ſpirits, which (being full of griefe for the upbraiding and inſulting *Peninna's*, over the perplexed *Hanna's* and faithfull ones of Chriſt) may eaſily fall with *Jeremy*, Chap. 12. 1. and *David*, Pſal. 73. 5. to diſtemper our ſelves, to charge God fooliſhly, and to call him to our owne barre, as if he ordered not matters ſo wiſely as wee would have him. Alas! Thoſe are ever moſt confident, who uſurp moſt. *Abſalom* thought his policie and wiſedome above his fathers in ruling of ſubjects; but it coſt him ſorrow and ruine. Let us not cavill againſt our owne dayes as the worſt, nor our owne lot, as the unhappieſt. Let us know its folly, wrap up all our own diſcontents in the field of Providence and Wiſedome. For why ſhould we be deſolate, or haſten our owne ruine raſhly before the time? Let it be enough for us that wee beare witneſſe to Jeſus & to his truth, and ſerve our time: But let us not breake out of our compaſſe, in which God hath ſet us. Nor let us think long, or tax God for ſeeming to ſtop his eare from our praiers, nor give over our waiting, and wax froward with him; but remember our Rule, That in publicke promiſes ſtill the time muſt be left to him who is the Soveraigne orderer of all times and ſeaſons. It is enough for us, that in the worſt and moſt degenerate times of all, God hath not left his Church as an Orphan, or deſolate, each member hath her owne particular faith and patience to ſet on worke: To keep the ſoule from ruſting, from either tedious impatience or deſperate careleſneſſe: Occupy theſe till God come, and theſe will ſo allay thy ſpirit, and exerciſe thy meekneſſe, patience and humility, that Gods time ſhall not ſeeme over long, faith ſhall not make over much haſte.

I doe not counſell thee to give over faith in performances. But to apply faith to ſuch promiſes in the meane while, as may ſuſtaine the ſoule with patient hope till Gods time is accompliſhed. The rod of the wicked ſhall not alway ly upon the lot of the righteous, leſt they ſhould put forth their hand to evill. The Lord will not alway bee angry, leſt fleſh ſhould faile. Rather then ſuch extremities ſhould come, God will put an end and ſay, The day of my redeemed ones is come. But if the Lord ſuſtaine the whileſt, and the burning buſh conſume not, is it

The uſe of this ſecond limit.

Wee muſt not taxe Gods adminiſtrations.

1 Sam. 1.

2 Sam. 15. 4. Eccleſ 7. 10. 15. 16.

Acts 1. 7.

Matth 25.

Hab. 3.

See Pſal. 125. 14.

Pſal. 125. 3.

Eſay 63. 3.

2 Kings

it not as good as if it burnt not? Enlarge thy ſhort and haſty ſpirit by this, that each day of Gods delay ſhortens the trouble. And remember, that a thouſand years with the Lord is as one day, and God is a pure act incomprehenſible, not ruled by time. I doe not by theſe paſſages, choke the zeale, importunity, clamors and expoſtulations of the Church? No, that were another extremity, and as much as to quaſh the Spirit of adoption, and to abridge the priviledges of the Saints, in their holy boldneſſe in prayer. For why? Read the moanes of the Church in Pſal. 40. and Eſay 63. and 64. the variety of her holy complaints, arguments wherewith ſhe laboureth to draw God on her ſide, againſt his ſworne foes: to perſwade him to be no longer darke, but to cauſe the mountaines to flow downe before his preſence. And ſo Pſalm 12. ſhe cryes out for help, becauſe all went to wrack. All this is lawfull, and to pray againſt implacable, incorrigible enemies: Plead thus, Lord, although to thee a thouſand yeares are as one day, yet it is not ſo with us: five, ſeaven yeares are ſomewhat to us; Lord, wee are feeble and faint, Pſal. 110. *ult.* Therefore tarry not long, Lord. But in all theſe, remember to aſcribe to God the glory of faithfull performance in his owne time, and ſay thus: Thou haſt afflicted us on every ſide, yet have we not forſaken thy Covenant the whileſt: we have not exaſperated our ſpirits againſt thy delayes, but turn'd the edge of our complaints againſt our ſelves, who by our treacherous unfruitfulneſſe have deſerved theſe ſcourges: our worſt enemy is within us. That ſin of ours hath vexed thee more then our croſſes and thy delayes vexe us. Purge them, remove the barre, and we doubt not but thy performances ſhall breake out as the light, when once our righteouſneſſe ſhall appeare, and our filthineſſe ſhall be cleanſed, nothing ſhall let thy promiſes from being fulfilled. This for the ſecond.

2 Per. 3. 8.

Pſal. 119.

Limitation the third. God keeps promiſe with them only that live by faith.

The third and laſt limitation is this, That the Lord keeps his promiſes faithfully; but yet upon condition, to ſuch as not onely are his own ſervants (for what have dogges to doe with the childrens bread?) but ſuch of his owne as abide ſo, and feare him, live by faith, and keep his Covenant. The ſum of the point is, that which *David* Pſal. 25. 10. expreſſeth thus: *All the wayes of the Lord are mercy and truth.* But to whom? Surely *to ſuch onely as keep his Covenant.* Iſrael was the Lords peculiar above all the earth: but it was not enough for them to hold their name onely, but to keep cloſe to the Lord: If Iſrael would have walked in my wayes, then it ſhould goe well with them, and with their children for ever. It was the Lords ſpeech to *David* of *Salomon*, Hee ſhall be my ſonne, and I will call him *Iedidijah*, the Lord loved him. And if he tranſgreſſe againſt me, I will chaſtiſe him with the Rods of men, but my loving kindneſſe will I never take from him. Marke (Brethren) there is a promiſe which the Lord will performe to all that are in covenant with him, that is, he will not finally forſake them. But yet in the mean time if they venture ſo much hereupon, that they break their league, play the harlots, and forſake their husband, he will make them feele to their coſts, that he can alſo break with them and forſake them; and ſo will he goe on with them till he have wearied them, and by ſome adverſity or other, within or without, ſent them home with

1 Chro. 17. 13.

2 Chro. 16. 3. 4.

with ſorrow and ſhame to their firſt husband. Men muſt not looke to be looſe with God, and yet binde him to be cloſe to them. Excellent is that of *Oded* the Prophet to *Aſa*, ſpeaking of the revolted ten Tribes, Of a long time was Iſrael without God, or a Law, or a Prieſt. And why? Surely, becauſe they had forſaken his Temple, and Worſhip, his Arke and Mercy ſeat: and therefore the Lord plagued them with all adverſity. And ſo will he doe to you: if yee cleave to him, he will cleave to you, but if you warp from him, ſo will he from you. Conſider (I pray you brethren) and God give us underſtanding. The Lord will keep promiſe with his; but then they muſt not play their parts with him. For why? Shall the Father ſpit in his Daughters face, and ſhall ſhe not be ſeparate from him ſeven dayes? It was the Lords ſpeech to *Moſes* touching *Miriam*, as you know. And ſo I ſay to us, If wee walke contrary toward the Lord, hee will walke contrary to us, truſt to it. And that not onely in caſe of foule revolts, if wee ſhould play the Adulterers, Oppreſſors, Blaſphemers, &c. Such ſinnes wee dare not meddle with (haply) for the lowd cry, and inward waſting of conſcience. But yet (perhaps) we dare withdraw our ſelves from God by unbeliefe, fall out of love with his promiſes: wee dare forgoe our joy and delight which we have had in his preſence, and runne to pits which will hold no water, as if the fountaine were unpleaſant: Wee dare ſuffer that pretious ſeed of Life to dye (if it may dye) in us, and walke deadly, coldly, baſely in our courſe: We dare allay and forſake our firſt love to God, and zeale to his truth: wee dare run to the courſe of this declining, formall, ſapleſſe and powerleſſe world, and ſhake off all ſpirituall cloſeneſſe and communion with God, and yet wee thinke to doe well. But know it, this is the great quarrell of all: I meane the quarrell of Gods covenant, God will avenge it ſadly: his ſoule ſhall have no pleaſure in ſuch.

Num. 12. 14.

Levit. 26. 21.

Heb. 10. 37.

Jer. 2. 13.

Levit. 26. 25.

Lay it to your hearts (brethren) and know the performance of promiſes, is the immediate way whereby the Spirit of Grace conveyes the preſence of God to his ſervants. Wee have no voice to heare, nor ſights to ſee, ſave the voyce and light of the promiſes: If we can cleave to them, we hold the Lord, and hee is preſent in our ſoules, as he was to *Paul* in that ſad darkneſſe, Acts 27. 23. But if wee ſhake off the life of faith, where is our title to the performing of promiſes? or where is our right to the preſence of God? I remember what the Lord tells thoſe Iſraelites in the Wilderneſſe, I will ſend my Angell before you, and he ſhall carry you forth in your journey: But take heed you grieve him not, for he will not ſpare you, but withdraw his preſence from you. So ſay I: We would claime Gods preſence, and God muſt bee our God, and performe all promiſes, as faſt as we gape after them: But in the meane ſeaſon, we leave the condition at large. Some of us have formerly been zealous, yea ſuffered for God, and loſt our credit, our goods, our liberties for him: Here was life and power; but now wee hold but a carkaſſe of the old temper, a meere name that we live, wee are growne Polititians, civilians, cloſe profeſſors, wiſe in our way, reſt in the fagge end of formality and common worſhip. And what thinke we? May we be as bold upon performance of promiſes as formerly?

Exod. 23. 20.

2 Kings

Jona 1. & 4.

Judg. 19. 3.

Job 6. and throughout.

May 1.

Spirituall penalties attend ſpirituall ſins.

May we chalenge the preſence of God in his Word as formerly? No, no, others of us dare be forward with God, as *Iona* was, nouriſh our ſpirits in anger, let the Sunne goe downe upon it, rage and raile like mad men in our moods? And if we be told of it, wee will defend it, & we will be ſo: for we ſay, our wrong was reall, and fleſh and bloud cannot beare it. What? Will you flye from God, and looke that hee ſhould follow you up and downe, as the fooliſh Levite did his whoriſh Concubine? Others of us dare abuſe the Sabbath, or elſe have no delight in it, ſpeaking our owne words. Others cannot be rated off from the creature, but run after our profits, wills, vanities, pleaſures, faſhions, and cocker our children therein without checke. Others will take the uttermoſt of our liberties, and goe upon the brinke. Others regard not our families, ſet not up the worſhip of God there, or pray for faſhion. Others are growne juſt to the frame of the times, and give God ſo much, and no more then the common ſort doe, and yet paſſe well. And ſo I might be endleſſe. But know it (Brethren) Gods promiſes are like himſelfe, and are faithfully performed on his part, howbeit if this be our frame, we ſhall finde a change, and hee will take in his Sun-ſhine, we ſhall not finde his preſence as in former times to us? Did the Lord withdraw himſelfe from holy *Iob*, while he walked in uprightneſſe, and eclipſe his preſence and promiſes from him, write bitter things againſt him, compaſſe him about with terrors, hide his face, and all juſtly, even to humble him more deeply, and prevent that which elſe proſperity might have bred in him? Wonder not then (brethren) if the Lord withdraw himſelfe from us, and turne away his performing of promiſes, into breach of covenant, when hee meets with ſuch ſcurfe as this in our hearts and lives. And let the uſe of the point in Gods name be this (which I pray us all to obſerve) that henceforth we ceaſe to wonder if wee finde the Lord otherwiſe towards us, then formerly, ſo long as the quarrell of his Covenant depends. I grant that there were never any dayes ſuch as ours in point of complaint of Gods abſence, darkneſſe, and not performing of promiſes. But withall conſider when were there ſuch wofull dayes of Revolts & Apoſtaſies from God, and the power of his truth, as now? Each face is pale, and each hand is upon the pained ſide: But it is rather becauſe men may not have their will of God, and keep him cloſe in performance of promiſes, when yet their lives ſwarme with all abominations? Should I not be avenged of ſuch time-ſervers and hypocrites as theſe, (ſaith the Lord in the Prophet) doe you wonder if hee have hidden himſelfe, and doth count you as you are, refuſing to performe promiſes? No, no: wonder not, wonder rather if he ſhould: looke not for it till you repent. If he darken himſelfe in the chiefe promiſe of pardon, of peace and comfort in conſcience: or in point of his Spirit of preſence, and the graces of it, as humbleneſſe, and patience, love and mercy: if he ſhorten you in the beauty of your converſation, that your lives are not ſo ſweet, your light not ſo cleare as in time paſt: if hee abſent himſelfe from you in his Ordinances, reſtraining the influence of them, ſuffering them to be dark and fruitleſſe? if he leave you in your companies to bee unprofitable, in your liberties to bee carnall, in your ſolitarineſſe

(ſolitarineſſe to be dead hearted, if he harden your hearts, and cauſe you to erre from his waies; ſo that all your praiers, faſtings, ſacraments, covenants, ſhould come forth at your noſtrils, as irkeſome as thoſe Quales did: I ſay wonder not, its but righteous.

Vſe. Breakers of covenant with God, ſhall finde God breake with them.

Make this uſe of it, to abhorre boldneſſe with God in challenging promiſes to be performed when you breake the condition. Rather enter into your ſoules, and ſearch out the cauſe of the Lords abſence, ſaying, it was not wont to be thus, that thou ſhouldeſt breake promiſe thus, Lord, and leave me to ſhift for my ſelfe; its I who have broken covenant with thee! O breake my heart for it! let it not be all one with me, whether I feele thy preſence, or want it! Its the death of my ſoule to be without thee! I walke deſolately, mine heart melts in my boſome as wax, I am conſumed for thine anger as with a moth, and I have no reſt in all my fleſh for thee! Oh Lord, let it exerciſe mee throughly, and uſe any meanes, rather then my diſeaſe ſhould rankle, and grow incurable in me! When *David* ſaw that *Sauls* countenance was changed to him, in what a pickle was he? How did he bemoane it to *Ionathan*? And yet his favour had beene deare of the price: and ſhalt not thou mourne for the loſſe of preſence and performance of promiſes from God? Oh take heed! goe not on, adde not drunkenneſſe to thirſt, grow not from one or two falls, to a falling ſickneſſe: What is the life of moſt men, but a ſinning and repenting, repenting and ſinning againe? Yea though the Lord be angry and ſmite them, what doe they, ſave go on ſtill in the frowardneſſe of their heart, as Eſay 57. 16. Oh take heed! Commune with God and thine heart, conſider the ſad ſteps of thy revolt, undoe thy worke, get the Lord Jeſus to be thy Mediator, better then *Ionathan*, for he was like to have beene ſlaine for his labour, but Chriſt ſhall be accepted, and the Lord ſhall reſtore thee againe, and thou ſhalt bee as in time paſt unto him; returne by a promiſe, and by renewing thy faith, as by thy unbeleefe thou didſt revolt; the Lord is willing that thou doe ſo, and he will heale all thy backſlidings, and marry thee after thy harlots tricks and divorce, Jer. 2. and 3. read the places. Soder not up thy errors by duties, weigh not good againſt bad, but by a promiſe: And ſo doing, thy fleſh ſhall returne like the fleſh of a childe, and thou ſhalt bee cleane, and then thy title to the performance of promiſes ſhall bee reſtored: And as the daughter of the Prieſt, having buried her husband, might returne and eat bread in her fathers houſe as when ſhe was a virgin; ſo ſhalt thou returne to thy former *demenſum* at the Lords board, and thy charter of promiſes ſhall be reſtored, and the performance of them. If thou belong to God, thus it ſhall be with thee; ſome croſſe or other God will ſend thee home by, he will cauſe thy wounds to ſtinke, and thy reines to burne within thee, but hee will ſet home his truth in thee: yea (rather then faile) he will ſet the Divell upon thee, though he pull him off againe, in mercy, rather then he will loſe thee. But if thou be a revolting hypocrite, and a ſerver of the time, thou maiſt goe where thou ſhalt, God will not owne thee. Thus much for this third Uſe.

1 Sam. 20. 1, 2, 3.

Levit. 22. 13.

Now it is time that we haſten to other Uſes of the Doctrine. A

2 Kings

Vſe 4. Inſtruction & Caveat. God muſt bee left to himſelf to performe promiſes, without mixing of our wits and wills therewith.

fourth Uſe therefore is inſtruction with caveat: If God performe all his promiſes, let us learne ſo to carry our ſelves as becomes them that beleeve this truth; let not us joine purchaſers with God in performances: but ſtand ſtill, looke on, and behold the faithfulneſſe of God; let us give faire way to his providence in this kinde, and leave the buſineſſe to himſelfe, as onely concerning himſelfe. As *Naomi* ſaid to *Ruth*, Reſt and be ſtill, for the man will not be quiet in himſelfe till he bring the matter about, leave it to him: ſo let us doe. God needs not our negotiouſneſſe, or double diligence to bring his matters to paſſe, he can doe them beſt himſelfe: And yet ſo it is, that as in all other lawfull actions we muſt come in, and chop our gourds in the pottage to defile it, ſo eſpecially in the performing of promiſes. Our mixtures muſt be added, our humors and extremities, or elſe all is marred. The Diſciples muſt needs crave fire from heaven to deſtroy the Samaritans, or elſe their affection to their Maſter cannot ſubſiſt. So *Peter* cannot love his Maſter, except he diſſwade him from death. Juſt ſo is it in this buſineſſe with moſt men. From the chiefe promiſe of ſalvation to the leaſt and loweſt, we muſt have a finger in the worke, and promiſes muſt paſſe through our diſpatch. To give God the honour of fulfilling, as well as promiſing, is too difficult for us. And thence it is, that we ſo hardly obtaine the promiſes, they ſticke betweene our fingers, our haſtnings, our feares, our dallying, our preſumption cauſeth ſo much ſorrow betwixt the making and performing of promiſes. If God were nakedly beleeved without our owne ſelfe-love, the worke would ſoon be at an end. God promiſed *Rebecca* that the elder of the twinnes ſhould ſerve the younger. She could not reſt content with that, but ſhe muſt deviſe how, as if God needed her ſinne, ſhifting and lying to bring it to paſſe, and in doing ſo, ſhe being taxed by *Iacob*, tels him, Thy curſe bee upon me my ſonne. But ſhe could not ſo eaſily latch the blow. For, what might be the cauſe why *Iſaac* fetcht over the bleſſing the ſecond time, ſave onely to reprove the indirect courſe that *Rebecca* had taken? Its true, that the ſpirituall birthright tooke effect from the preſent: But the temporall was delayed ſix or ſeven hundred yeares, till *David* brought Edom under bondage, I ſubmit my judgement to wiſer men, and I doubt not, but other cauſes may be alledged; but why might not the promiſe have taken effect ſooner, if ſhee had ſuffered the Lord to take his courſe? We ſee *Eſau* and his poſterity were Dukes and Princes, when poore *Iacob* was faine to bee a ſervant, a pilgrim, and his children to be ſlaves foure hundred and thirty yeares ere they went into Canaan. Who doubts but that God guided all? Yet I ſee not, but we may ſuſpect God to have had an hand of puniſhment for this prevention of his performances. As the midwives ſubtilty ſpake of the Iſraelitiſh women to *Pharaoh*, That they were lively, and needed not them: So I may ſay, Gods promiſes are lively, and need no midwifery of ours, they are not ſo weake that our wiſdome need bring them to the birth. Yet (brethren) we cannot be kept from venturing. God hath promiſed to be allſufficient, yet, as if he could not be ſo without us, we muſt ſtep forth, and beſtirre us with uſing ſome indirect meane or other to purchaſe a performance: God hath

Luke 9.54.

Matth. 16.22.

Gen.27.6.

Indeed God foretold it to Abraham, and alledged the ſinnes of Amorites were not full; yet why might not this come in as an externall motive to God his execution? Gen.15.16.

Exod.2.19.

hath promiſed to bleſſe us in all we put forth our hand to; but if wee marry a childe, or purchaſe a commodity, we muſt uſe ſuch a deale of our owne indirect wit and pollicy and fetches, that by that time wee have done, he that lookes upon the iſſue may halte doubt whether the performance be Gods or our owne; at leaſt if it be Gods, yet it is ſooted and crocked with ſuch a deale of our owne, that it hath almoſt loſt his beauty. And hence it is, that as it was with *Iacob*, ſo it is with us (though in a far divers kinde) our ſtriving with God, makes us halt ever after, and commonly we carry ſome odde marke or other about us, for our interblending Gods performances with our inventions. Let us learne then to let God alone, that we may enjoy ſuch a performance of his promiſe, as beſt ſutes with his owne will and way; let us count it our ſtrength to ſit ſtill, Eſay 30. ſo ſhall we not bee in love with our owne nets, nor intervert the entire praiſe due to God, to our owne wits, but take Gods worke home to our ſelves, and yeeld him the fruit of our praiſe as himſelfe requires, Pſal. 50. ult. So much for this Uſe.

Vſe 5. Terror. 1. Branch. Gods Faithfulneſſe to us in keeping promiſe, muſt teach us to be faithfull in our promiſes to others. Matth. 7. 2. Prov 20. 6.

I come to a fifth Uſe, and that is terror and bitter reproofe of all ſuch as goe quite contrary to God in this courſe of performing promiſes: Thou ſhouldeſt be mercifull, as thine heavenly Father is, and therefore faithfull alſo in thy promiſes, as he is. Nay more, with what meaſure thou meteſt to him, the ſame thou ſhouldeſt looke to bee meaſured with from him againe. How then canſt thou plead from him performance of promiſes to thee, when as thy ſelfe breakeſt promiſes to him, and to men? But of the former of theſe, I will ſpeake at the end of the Uſe: touching faithfulneſſe to men, where ſhall we finde a faithfull man, as *Salomon* ſpeaks? Surely thoſe that are faithfull ſhould be ſo much the more eſteemed, as rare jewells, but the times now neither uſe it, nor love it. What promiſes will not men make to pay ſums of money borrowed of their friends by ſuch a day? But when it comes, there is no ſuch matter, their turne is ſerved, and as for yours, they have you at vantage, you muſt ſhift as you can. As good hold a wet Eele by the taile, as you by a promiſe: Words are winde as with men, and bonds are as rotten wood & ſtubble, you muſt not urge them now a dayes except you will be laught at. Breach of words and bands goes by a cuſtome, and this makes that great ſervice of lending, ſo abhorred by men, becauſe conſcience in repaying is ſo ſunke and decayed.

Queſt. How farre bands binde in conſcience.

Anſwer. There is a difference betweene bonds in meer civill caſes, and criminall.

Here perhaps ſome might aske, whether bands put into the Courts of men for appearance, or other ends betweene man and man, binde in point of conſcience to performance? I anſwer, except civill bands did ſo binde, we doe unjuſtly taxe men for breaking bands and promiſes, for although a forfeit be annexed to the breach, yet thats uſed for forme of Law, not for diſcharge of the borrower or party bound. For the lender wants his money or bargaine for the preſent, and is damnified by diſappointment; forfeits ſometimes are hazardable, but to be ſure, they require a longer time of traverſe then can be endured: yet in ſome caſes I ſay that civill bonds, becauſe their forfeit is a double mulct and loſſe to the forfeiter, may be conceived to ſatisfie the Law, when the honeſty of the party cannot be queſtioned. But it is

2 Kings

not in criminall cases as in civill; for in criminall, the deserter of his bond takes himselfe to be eased by the deserting of it, and not damnified by it; now the party questioned must not be his own carver to ease himself, but be judged by another: Neither doe the allegations of pretended unjustice, incompetency, or the like, excuse in this case; for it is supposed, that the party accused must not be his owne judge, and besides, pressures must be legally alledged and impleaded for mitigation, and not shunned upon our owne heads. If our cause be bad, wee had need judge our selves, if good, we must looke up to him that is higher then oppressors.

Reason 1.

Secondly, to desert criminall bonds concurres not with the intents of them that binde who trust to our fidelity, and would not else have taken bonds, and therefore ease us the whilst, but rather open their mouth against us for equivocators, Jesuits and hypocrites, which we ought not to occasion, because it hath ranke appearance of evill. Thirdly, as the case may stand, the conscience of the bound party at the binding was convinced of no other, save of an honesty, and obligatory promise to present himselfe according to bond: now to overrule an act past by a latter information, or second thoughts, is unjust, and cannot but snare his conscience: Therefore it is unlawfull. Fourthly, its scandalous and prejudiciall to the cause of Religion, which all those who are religious carry in their foreheads as well as in their bosomes, and therefore must be very tender and cautelous of; I say how Gods cause suffers through us, and left by our sides the body of Religion be wounded: yea (as the case may stand) although wee had some strong reason for our action, yet because the wound is broader then our plaister, we should be wary. Fifthy, the deserting of bonds in such cases, imputes very shrewdly to the cause we are engaged in, and inferres a deserting of it, which is a sad businesse for him who thinkes his cause honest: and if it be alledged, that he doth it to avoid a sadder pinch, I answer, no pinch of penalty is comparable to pinch of conscience. Sixtly, by this meane, we desert not onely our bond and cause, but even that whereby we professe to be underpropped, *viz.* the use of our faith in suffering, and in our wel-doing to commend our selves to God as a faithfull keeper? What place is there left for God to protect us, to quit our persons, to plead our cause, to honour his truth against opposition, when we our selves cut off and prevent his providence our selves by our discretion? I have said enough, and perhaps some may thinke too much: but I have considerately done it, not in any unkindenesse (God knowes) but first, because it hath ever beene my judgement. 2. In some respects I feele my selfe called to professe it. 3. I hope by this meanes to stoppe the like course in some. 4. I see it may bring a double pressure upon others, guiltlesse of the same projects. 5. It grieves me to see that a new custome, the spawne of mens politicke braines, should prevaile against the better practice of such as have feared God in times past to my uttermost memory. 6. Those that doe thus, raise bad opinion by other consequences hereupon, which I silence, else I could have beene silent.

Apology for the Authors intent herein.

But to returne: God is a great performer of promises, and is known by

by that name, as the King of England is knowne by the name of Defender of the Faith, its his royall Title. Thousands of years are but as one day to his memory, he forgets not one promise all that while: The Saints have alway yeelded him this Prerogative, A God that keepeth covenant: Luke 1.70, 71. *Zachary* tels us, that he raised up a strong horne of salvation, according to the oath made to our father *Abraham*, that he would give us: To performe the promise made to our forefathers, and to keep his holy covenant: Oh! if he be so faithfull, shall his servants weare a contrary badge of falshood? Is it not a marke of a citizen of heaven, Psal. 15. 6. that he keeps promises, although to his detriment? Shall heathens condemne us in this? Of whom one obtaining leave of the enemy to goe home to Rome upon promise to returne, went, and returned, and was rolled to death in a barrell driven with nailes. *Iephtha* is said to have kept his vow in simplicity (if he did keepe it) for lacke of knowledge, and so did his good daughter, my father goe not backe: But we in subtilty, and for lacke of conscience breake promises as fast as we make them. No man can tell what to make of our dates of payment, our promises to aid the distressed, to make good dowries promised in marriage, to performe trusts reposed in us, for orphans in point of education of them, repayring of stocks, payment of debts, legacies, but sweare and forsweare our selves in the administring of goods, as if we had sold, and paid creditors to the uttermost: Alas the measure of your foote is as good as your bond, one tricke or other will salve all! how many wofull and graceless banquerupts are there, who under the name of profession, have undone many poore widowes, poore orphans, poore kindred, yea strangers, who have admired them for the repute of their sincerity and zeale to the Gospell? Oh (say they) I durst put my life in his hand, much more my will, my estate, my wife, and children! the more wofull traitor thou who hast undone them all, and made them beggars, and wishall caused the lewd to cry out and condemne all Religion and Purity! Endlesse it were to mention the common defaults of men in their buyings, and tradings, and whole conversation! woe be to all such as dare thus spit in the face of God & honesty! and yet walk with as impudent and bold faces, and hardned hearts, as if none could say, blacke is their eye! But then, to conclude, what shall be said to such as mocke God himselfe, and dally with those solemne vowes and covenants they have made with him? Some upon their death-beds solemnly vowing repentance to God, restitution of stolne goods to them whom they defrauded, all to stop conscience, but upon recovery have paid God with double impiety, and men with oppression; *Ionah*, *Hezechias*, *Davids* breach of covenants shall not helpe you; you have sinn'd with *Peter* (as that wretch said) so, you have covenanted with these, but you have not repented of your breach thereof with these. Learne first to purpose, and then to promise: so doth the Lord, and not in your heat of feare, and being upon the racke, to lavish out promises of an ell long, one inch whereof you will not keepe after. But you fare accordingly: I wish you no worse scourge to whip you then your owne, for neither will God, nor Gods Ministers trust you, they may visit you on

2 Kings

Judg 11.30. 36.39.

Breakers of covenants with God are in a bad condition.

2 Kings

on your death-beds, and beare witneſſe againſt you what you have ſaid, but they will not truſt you. Men alſo abhorre you, ſo that as they who are hang'd, are execrable, and between heaven and earth; ſo heaven hath vomited you downe, and earth caſt you up, as wofull perſons: Be ſcared in Gods feare, and repent of this treachery.

2 Branch. Divers inſtances. 1 Such as have no promiſe, and yet charge God for breaking promiſe, offend.

Secondly, this is terror to other ſorts of perſons, who complaine of God for fruſtrating them of performances, when as yet they never had any promiſes made them. What? Shall God beare the blame for your ſakes? Did ever any complaine of Gods unfaithfulneſſe, who had to doe with a promiſe? Why then are you the firſt that reproach God for nothing? You are like him that called God an hard Maſter, for reaping where hee never ſowed, and gathering where he never ſtrawed. But doth God doe ſo? No, he performes no promiſes ſave to ſuch as are in Chriſt. Wõder not if God afflict you every way, with an unquiet heart, with horrors and feares, aſtoniſhment & anguiſh, that he may drive you into covenant. As for your quarrelling with him, God may ſay as *Iehu* ſaid to the meſſenger, What haſt thou to doe with peace? Turn behind me. And yet what is more common then the mutterings of ſuch hypocrites? See Eſay 58. and Mal. 3. But God is not ſo ſuperfluous a fulfiller of promiſes, that he ſhould enlarge himſelf to them that are none of his. It's enough that he fails not in neceſſary performances. Moreover, this is terror to a contrary ſort of hypocrites and prophane ones, who (on the other ſide) boaſt of ſuch performances as are not. As you ſee there bee divers ſorts of Market-folks: moſt complain of their hard penyworths, but ſome are ſuch fooles, as to bely their owne markets, and boaſt of ſuch penyworths as they never got. And this befalls in ſundry reſpects: Firſt in reſpect of Gods forbearance of them, and ſhewing much patience and long-ſuffering toward them, that having been ſuch ſinners as they ſay they have, yet God ſhould not ſet them on the ſtage of reproach, and make them a by-word in the world. This they interpret a great performance unto them; the rather becauſe they ſee not onely many bad ones, but even many good ones afflicted in this life for their ſinnes. But oh foole! becauſe ſentence is deferred againſt thee, doeſt thou crack of patience? Hath this long ſuffering of God led thee to repentance? No, thine heart is ſtill ſet in thee to doe evill, and to heap up wrath; but it pleaſes a preſumptuous hypocrite to ſhrowd himſelfe under a covert which is none of his, and to goe on ſecurely in ſin, under pretext of being in high favour with God. But oh wofull creature! this Lion couchant will one day turne rampant, and bee in good earneſt, though now he ſeemes to dally. All mens ſinnes are not alike, ſome goe before, ſome follow, but all meet in judgement, except they repent. I aske thee, hath God been ſo patient toward thee, by vertue of a promiſe? Doth he not ſo, Rom. 9. to veſſels prepar'd to deſtruction, as in the old world, and Sodoms caſe? Doth he not ſo to a ſinner of an hundred yeares old, nay to *Cain* of nine hundred, who yet at length muſt be deſtroyed? Did he not ſo to thoſe Atheiſts, 2 Pet. 3. 6. 7. whoſe conceit yet could not out-ſleep their damnation? Shall God performe a promiſe to ſuch as are in league with hell? But why are others, leſſe ſinners, ſo ſet in the fore-front, & eſcape? Surely, perhaps, to break their heart,

2 Kings 9.

2. So doe ſuch as deceive themſelves. And that 1. By Gods forbearance.

Rom. 2 3.

1 Tim. 5. 24.

Eccleſ. 8. 12.

heart, and convert them to God; whereas thou goeſt on in a cloſe and hardned heart, to colour and excuſe the like ſins: or if not, yet to be far from repenting of them. It had been better for thee God had ſerved thee ſo too, then to harden thee by long-ſuffering. And perhaps thou haſt bought of theſe ſinnes with thy wealth and greatneſſe; but God is not mocked. 2 King

Another ſort of theſe are, ſuch as boaſt becauſe they are kept from open ſins and outrages, have no deep temptations, no great horrors or diſtempers of conſciences, but goe on in a faire and civill way (as one ſaid of that Emperour) rather free from foule vices, then qualified with any true vertues: They are well thought of, and are no baſe drunkards, or the like. Such and ſuch (ſay they) run into exceſſe of riot and diſcredit, for their ſpend-thrifty, uncleane, and ruffianlike courſes: but I am void of ſuch evils. Is it not (ſay they) a ſigne of favour? Doth not God promiſe to his, to keep them free from ſuch offences? Oh miſtaken wretch! God upholds his in their integrity indeed, in token of love, Pſal. 41. 12. But integrity is equality from great and ſmall. But alas! ſin as ſin never affected thy ſoule as yet, thou haſt no ſenſe of thy nature, of the enmity of God, of a ſecret, falſe, prophane, hollow, unſavoury heart. Thy ſent is in thee ſtill, as in *Moab*: God hath not rolled thee upon thy dregges, therefore they ſettle. And is this mercy (thinkeſt thou) to ſoder thee up in a baſe courſe? Thou art held in by abſtinence, but that's a negative principle, no poſitive grace. Reſtraint by education, favour of nature, generall light, awe of puniſhment, is not the favour of a promiſe; theſe never coſt the bloud of Chriſt to purchaſe, at leaſt they are not the purchaſe in kinde. 2. Abſtinence from open ſins. Jer. 48. 29

A third ſort are, ſuch as boaſt of promiſes in point of externall bleſſings: God hath ſo furniſht them with health, ſtrong bodies, ſucceſſe in trades, good crops, marriage and children, as much corne as can ſtand on ground, no Cow but gendreth, and caſts not Calfe, that they conclude themſelves happy, as few rubbes and changes as any, Pſal. 17. 14. They goe downe in peace and leave all to their babes. But are you not alſo of them, who becauſe they have no changes, feare no God? Such may be as ranke Atheiſts as live. God makes no promiſes to ſuch as goe downe into the pit. Not the ſtill, but the ſafe death argues a promiſe. True it is, Pſal. 37. 37. The end of the righteous is alway peace; but it is the peace of good conſcience, not of ſtupor and eaſe. Performances are alway good things, but good things are not alway performances. Mercies of the left hand are no tender mercies: Love is no more diſcerned by theſe, then hatred. Haſt thou got the love and good will of him that dwelt in the Buſh? Surely, except the ſea of mercy hath come between thy wealth and thy ſoule, to purge away all thy droſſe of carnall ſavour, the bleſſings of the Sun and Moone, and earth, cannot pleaſure thee. Alas no! All is from a dry pit, as the corne on the thatch, which fills not the hand of the Mower. One performance from a promiſe is worth ten ſuch bleſſings as theſe. 3. By outward bleſſings. Job, 21. 10 Note. Eccleſ. 9. 1 Deut. 33. 16. Jer. 2. 13.

Laſtly, all ſuch as boaſt of their hearings, prayers, doings and ſufferings, good affections to religion, diſtaſtes of old ſinnes. Theſe (they ſay) argue a change, and that is a ſigne of a covenant. But, Oh poore ſoule! theſe may be ſome changes in reſpect of what in times paſt hath been. But theſe are not that change which comes from Gods promiſe: except ſome other markes as well as theſe, may be alledged. *Iehu* doted upon himſelfe, to ſee ſuch zeale againſt *Iehoram*. But none of the ſins of *Ahabs* houſe were purged out of him. Goe, finde out ſome ſurer markes then the forbearance of ſome old anger, pride, wan- 4. By their Religion. 2 Kings 10. 16.

2 King. wantonneſſe, while the pang laſteth, or elſe this flame will breake out againe, and burne up all. To conclude, I ſay, let all ſuch bee afraid of their rotten and falſe proppes. What became of thoſe Sycophants, who would needs be King *Edward*, or ſuch other Princes? Were they not hanged up? What noble man can endure a baſe fellow, who pleads kindred to him, becauſe of name, or likeneſſe of countenance? When yet they are mungrels, and baſtards, having no drop of Noble blood within them? Beware therefore, and meddle not with Gods performances, they are Childrens bread, and belong to no Dogges while they are ſo. Thus much for this.

Vſe 6. A ſecond Inſtruct. with caveat. Luk. 9. 23 Faith in promiſes & performances, i a moſt pretious Jewel, and why?

A ſixt uſe is Inſtruction, teaching us, the admirable honour and prerogative of ſaving and pretious faith. It is cloathed with all the wealth, wardrobes, treaſures and proviſions of God: All the performances of God are hers. As our Saviour ſaid, If thou canſt beleeve, all things are poſſible. No ſooner doth faith cloſe with a promiſe upon earth, but the Lord in heaven cloſes with that ſoule by ratifying to it what it beleeveth. Faith (as hee ſaith) is, when that which is ſaid is done. The Lord meaning to doe a poore ſoule good, cauſeth it to meet his purpoſe by beleeving it, that ſo he may honour it with a performance. Faith is like the Cherubims, which were alway peeping into the Mercy ſeat: ſo doth faith alway trade in heaven, ſpying out what good thing God is preparing for the ſoule, that ſhe may beleeve it, and carry it alway with her. If faith concurred not as well with performances as with promiſes, who would care for it? But ſhe makes all reall and preſent to the ſoule, as well as promiſed. As face anſwers to face in water, ſo doth a promiſe to a performance in a needing ſoule, and that by the mediation of Faith. As our Saviour ſaid to *Martha*, Said I not to thee, If thou beleeve, thou ſhalt ſee the glorious power of God? Marke *Naaman* here: No ſooner doth he reſigne up himſelfe to the promiſe by waſhing, but inſtantly there comes in new marrow into his bones, and ſmoothneſſe upon his fleſh: here is no intermiſſion or delay of performance, looke what was ſaid, is now done with eaſe. *Naamans* worke was to beleeve: But having ſo done, all the thought is taken, God lookes to the cure, without his care. Could any thing come between him and home, betweene promiſe and performance? Not poſſibly: for who ſhould hinder God, Eſay 43. 13. Faith is the preſence of God in the ſoule, by making an evidence of things not ſeen, and a bottome in things abſent, grace for grace, *Ioh.* 1. 17. may bee grace of performing for grace of beleeving. Let this uſe lead on another then in the feare of God, and teach us to try our faith by this excellent property, of performing promiſes. Thinke not thy ſelfe to have true faith, except thou haſt performing faith. Men reſt in a naked empty faith: bearing themſelves in hand that they have true faith, and they looke at the faithfulneſſe of God in promiſing; but aske them of performances, and then they know not what to ſay to the matter. Alas poore ſoule! Faith is no pang, or paſſage of a mans ſpirit, woulding this or that: nor a looking at a promiſe of truth, as a thing doubtfull to me-ward: but it is a bottoming grace, concurring moſt holily and humbly with the Lord, in his reall and faithfull performings alſo. That heart which ſupplieth performances with conceits of things, that are not with ſome carnall contents or other, without the preſence of the thing beleeved, more or leſſe, is a dead faith, and knowes not the kindly nature of faith.

Heb. 11. 1.

True faith is performforming faith. And how.

Prevention of an offence.

My ſcope in thus ſaying, is not to adde ſorrow to ſorrow, and to pinch ſuch poore ſoules as have ſufficient griefe already for lacke of feeling: But to convince

vince all false hypocrites as rest in a faith of their owne, not in the faith of God, who as Esay 55. 2. saith, lay out their silver for no bread, but in the meane time nourish in themselves a dismall faith, which failes of the grace of performance. I dare not say that all performances are alike sensible; all hearings of our prayers are not alike manifest to our feeling, all fruit of receiving Sacraments, fasting, and the like are not of one size, measure, carry not the same evidence, peace, comfort: But hence it followes not, that any true faith is or can be dead faith in point of performing. *Naamans* cure here was a more sensible one, then some spir tuall cures of faith are, because it was bodily: But yet, even when faith seemes poorest, her performances are reall, and she never truly resignes up herselfe to a promise, but if she come short in feeling, she hath a supply from the reall faithfulnesse of God, who hath told her, That such a corruption decayeth, such a grace encreaseth, such a good thing is cast upon her, because God hath said it, and this doth really stay and quiet her spirit in him. As an ancient Christian being asked whether he grew all this while in grace, answered, that he could not much boast of that he felt, howbeit he beleeved that he did, for God had said it, According to thy faith, so be it unto thee.

Faith when shee is at lowest, is yet a performing faith.

And contrariwise, hence learne the wofull misery and beggery of unbeleef: As *Salomon* speakes of the field of the sluggard, that the briars and brambles thereof argueth his sloth; so I may say of unbeleefe, that its the roote of all the rags and baseneſſe which men walke with. The difficulty of getting over this steep hill of performances comes onely from hence. *Ionathan* fought on the lower ground against the Philistins by faith, as if he had had the vantage of the ground. Many men have faire hopes and opportunities to get favours from God, but its not the price in the hand, but the heart of faith to beteame it to the promise, and to lay it out: Unbeleefe bindes the armes of mercy and grace in God behinde him. If God be so faithfull a performer, what hath stopt the fountaine all this while? Why is it so little a seen upon thy soule? How might this barren heath of thine heart ere now become a flood, as *Esay* saith 43. 20. if thy sinne had not dried it up? Well, as the sinne of an unbeleever shall not restraine the bounty of God from him that beleeveth, so neither shall the faith of a beleever supply the lacke of it in one that wants it. Thinke not (poore soule) that the Sacrament shall be ever the lesse savoury and effectuall to thee, because of them who come in to it with a sapleſſe and graceleſſe heart: Doe not thou thinke ere the meanlier of thy faith because hypocrites lowre upon thee, and discerne not thy priviledge. But looke the more narrowly into thy priviledge and solace thine heart in it; for neither shall any stranger enter into thy joy, nor yet shalt thou fare the worse for their beggery. So much for this.

Prov 24. 30.

1 Sam. 14. 13.

Unbeleefe bindes the armes of God fro ꝫ performing of promises.

Prov. 14. 10.

Seventhly, this point affords Admonition to all who would rejoyce in effectuall faith, and faith in performances: That they strive hard against every let in the way which might hold their faith in a barren and fruitleſſe defect and unprofitablenes. There is nothing so excellent but it hath some canker to fret out the pith of it, to blast the beauty of it. One barre is the mistaking of performances: we frame to our selves such an Idea of Gods favours, such a great measure of graces, such a pitch of faith, of mortification and holineſſe, that hereby our eyes are blindfolded from beholding such performances as the Lord bestoweth. But consider: Is God tyed to thy scantlings? We see how they,

Vse 7. Admonition. To avoid lets of performances. 1. Let. Mistaking performances.

2King they, Mica 2.6. come in and complaine againſt God in this kinde. But marke the anſwer of God: Oh thou houſe of *Iacob*, is my Spirit ſtraitned? Are not my words good to them that walke uprightly? So ſay I, is God falſe, becauſe thou overpitcheſt thy thoughts beyond Gods wiſdome? Thou aimeſt at another mans portion, as they who gathered manna were too greedy: But be content with thine owne: If thou have enough to keepe thee in working caſe, jealous of thy ſelfe and thy corruptions, its enough, although thou have not all at once. Thou wouldeſt have three or foure mens portions, ſo much as perhaps the Lord ſees would overthrow thee: Alas, what canſt thou beare in this multitude of corruption! If thou hadſt thy fill, it would coſt thee much buffeting to keep thee from pride! Know, that the very meer worke of exerciſing thy faith is a reward of it ſelfe. Secondly, truſt not to thy dead priviledge of being a Beleever, and ſo commit all to winde and weather: maintaine not a dull, drowſie, laſie heart of unbeleefe, but hold quarter daily with the Lord in concurring with his promiſes, ſee how his performances follow thy beleeving, and looke not that they ſhould drop into thy boſome, or be let downe in an engin all on the ſuddaine upon thee thou knoweſt not how: quicken up thy faith daily, elſe performances will prove but dead ware, and according to thine unbeleefe, ſo ſhall it be unto thee. Thirdly, murmure not when promiſes anſwer not thine expectation: If croſſed in our marriages, in our children, in the ſucceſſe of our labours, if debts purſue us, if croſſes follow us, if wee be not preſently anſwered in our faſting and prayers, but ſtill our hearts be obſtinate and hardned, then we fall to mutter againſt God, as if he were unfaithfull, but never enter into our ſelves to ſee how we warpe from the promiſe, and go to worke with our owne tooles. Fourthly, lay no ſtumbling blocke of our owne iniquity in our owne way, to ſtop the performing of promiſes: Every looſe, common and hollow profeſſor, let him decline never ſo much from God in his courſe, yet will boaſt as much of promiſes as others, and will not be beaten off: As thoſe Iſraelites in fighting with the Benjamites, would needs goe forward in the revenge of their ſinne, and lookt that God ſhould aſſiſt them, but never ſaw the ſinne which ſtill lay underneath; their Idolls I mean, which coſt them the loſſe of forty thouſand ſouldiers ere they got the victory. Men think if they ſhould be ſtript of Gods promiſes they were forlorne folk; but in the mean time they walke not cloſe with God, keep not touch with him in their covenants, dare play moſt unfaithfull parts with men in their practice, and thus runne into arrearedges, never dreaming that thereby they forfeit their right to performances, but hold up their heads with boldneſſe, and think that as good bloud runnes ſtill in their veines, as in the beſt beleevers.

2. Carnality and deadneſſe of heart.

3. Murmuring.

Ez.14.3.

4. Some groſſe ſin.

Judg.19. 20.21.22.

Fifthly, limit not God in his performances, we care not how little we have for our money, ſo we may have our humor pleaſed in ſome carnall content, we can forgoe ſpirituall; ſo we may have our turn ſerved in ſome one promiſe, we have enough, and can give God over for a good while after, and think much to hold on with Gods bounty, becauſe our ſtrait hearts are pincht with the exerciſe of faith, and therefore its juſt with God to puniſh our baſeneſſe, and unbeteaming ſpirits. Sixtly, beware of the error of the wicked, who goe to worke by ſenſe, and eſteeme Gods performances according to the outward meanes and poſſibilities which they have to compaſſe their ends: God is but a formall notion (upon point) with them. If thou looke upon the world, thou loſeſt the ſight of God, and wilt turne Atheiſt. Seventhly, beware of overſight and inob-

5. Limiting of God.

6. Error of the wicked.

ſervance

ſervance of promiſes: God performes daily and hourely one or other to thee or thine, to body or ſoule, in bleſſings or in corrections, yea more then hee is bound to: But thou gapeſt after ſome greater, or ſome other things, & ſo overſeeſt and paſſeſt by ſuch as are before thee, and thereby ſtoppeſt the courſe of thanks and of bleſſings, becauſe thou ſeeſt not how many waies Gods performances lye. Be quicke ſighted in obſerving mercies, and ſay with the Church, The compaſſions of the Lord are renued every morning, great is thy faithfulneſſe. An obſerving heart encourages the Lord to performe more, and he cannot abide an heart that pockets all, and puts them into a bottomleſſe purſe. Eightly, ſhunne curioſity and propenſeneſſe to challenge the Lord, when his publicke government and adminiſtrations pleaſe us not: To theſe many moe might be added, as ſloth and eaſe, worldlineſſe, formality in worſhip, little meditation, and ſuch like: They procure a dead life, a barren heart, an uncomfortable courſe: Remember, it muſt be an heart qualified for the nonce, which muſt walke with God in his promiſes and performances. It muſt be a cleare, humble, watchfull, innocent and ſelfe-denying ſpirit, not tainted with il cuſtome, and ſuch ſhall have no cauſe to complaine of God, nor be ſent empty away. So much for this Uſe.

2 King 7. Unobſervance.

Lam. 3. 23.

Hag. 1 8. 8. Curioſity and cenſure with others.

Eightly, this point is Exhortation to all beleevers, and that in ſundry particulars. Firſt, that they revive in themſelves the former Doctrine, that is, that they take meaſure of Gods promiſes to the full, that ſince God is ſo faithfull a performer of them all, they may underſtand their owne liberty, and improve it. Loſe no performance for lacke of a promiſe. God can enlarge Chriſt to every dimenſion of fulneſſe, height and depth: So doe thou. Thoſe John 6.27. could beteame to follow Chriſt for loaves, but they ſaw no further. Say we thus, Lord if thou heare me in this prayer, thou ſhalt heare of me often, I will ply thee with importunity, for there is no meaſure, no end nor bottome of thy goodneſſe; I will come to morrow, next day, continually: For thou art yeſterday, to day, and for ever the ſame. Tell thy ſoule, heaven were not heaven if thou couldſt reach all in it, yet doe thine endeavour, and pray with *Paul*, Eph. 3 16. that thou maiſt ſee more in Chriſt then thou canſt aske or thinke. As in the Lords Prayer thou art bidden to aske bread enough for the day, and that which exceeds, for ſo the word ſignifies. As much more Lord as thy bounty can afford. Oh (brethren) who would not know this Charter and Leaſe, except he cared not whether God performed or no? Lord I beleeve in that promiſe which reaches to all my life, to my corruptions, temptations, ſtraits, feares, to this and to a better life! Secondly, having ſo done, learn to lot upon him for each performance, eſpecially when it goes hard with thee otherwiſe, except God ſhould ſticke to thee. Thus *Ezra* having obtained leave of the King for his journey, and being now at a pinch for a ſufficient convoy in ſo perillous a journey, concluded, he would not goe to the King for it, leſt he ſhould upbraid him, but he would goe to the promiſe for it, by faſting and prayer, and having ſo done, was well appaid in himſelfe, lotting upon God, that in ſuch an extremity he would not faile him. So do thou.

Vſe 8. Exhortation. 1. Branch. To take meaſure of promiſes.

Heb. 13. 8

Mat. 6. ἐπιούσιον ἄρτον.

2. Branch. Lot upon God for performance. Ezra 8. 21.

Thirdly, to this end ſtrengthen thy ſelf by the plentifull experience of performances in time paſt; get a calender of performances: at ſuch a time I was heard for my wife, for my childe, anſwered in point of marriage, eſtate, gifts, credit: ſuch a ſtrong corruption was ſubdued, ſuch a grace enlarged, ſo that I ſee it were not in vaine to waite upon thy promiſes, if I had faith ſufficient to

3. Branch. Strengthen thy ſelf by thy experience.

2King Lament. 3.23.

equall and concurre with them. Let me forget none of thy faithfulneſſe in my receivings of the Sacraments, in my Sabbaths (whenas I could get mine heart to delight in them) in my very croſſes, when I could be humble, and be content to be as thou wouldſt have me. And ſhall not this experience ſtrengthen mee for time to come? Is there any ſhadow of change with thee, if I could bee the ſame? Thy baſe unbeliefe is to thy ſoule, as the laying of a peny to thine eye, cloſe, whereby thou art baffled ſo, that thou canſt ſee nothing; though thou ſtoodſt upon the top of the hill. This cauſeth thee to ſay within thy ſelfe, This day I am to goe to Gods Table & Feaſt; and ſurely I doubt I ſhall even come home as I go thither. I cannot ſee how God ſhould remove this brazen bolt of my old pride, unbeliefe, earthlineſſe, unkindneſſe, unmercifulneſſe, &c. Doeſt thou not? Why? Hath he never done thee as great good as this comes to? Yes: But thy unbeliefe makes thee to ſeek. Thou muſt learne to comprehend the Lord better, by faith and experience. I ſhould play the foole to bid a little childe of three yeares old, to bring me a great Church Bible, I know he cannot graſp it in his arms; or reach me a thing from the top of an high ſhelfe, it is above his reach. So is the length & breadth of Gods promiſes beyond thine for lack of comprehenſion. Oh poor ſoul! who knows what riches is in a promiſe? But what is it to thee that there is ſuch a Mine of gold, when thou walkeſt over it, and art aware of no ſuch matter? God was here, and thou wert not aware. If all promiſes in him are *Yea* and *Amen*; yea, and hee glories in it, that thou ſhouldſt beleeve it, and enjoy the benefit thereof: why ſhouldeſt thou weare a chaine and fetters about thee, when thou mightſt bee free? or make thy ſelfe equall to hypocrites and ſlaves, when the Lord allowes thee to bee a free man of his company? What is this, ſave (as *Iob* ſpeakes) wilfully to ſtint Gods hand, to the end that thy ſelfe mightſt be miſerable? Surely ſuch a one ſhall not have the happy lot to drink of thoſe floods of hony and butter, which are reſerved for the portion of ſuch as can lot and truſt to the fulneſſe of a promiſe.

Contrary miſery of of unbelief which cannot become herſelfe that largeneſſe which is in God.

Simil.

Job 20.17

When thou haſt been earneſt with God, this day, for pardon of thy failings, for mercy for thy wife and family, doeſt thou feele a checke within thy ſpirit, from plying God further? Doeſt thou think it enough? Shalt thou not need him as much to morrow? Are there not infinite many paſſages in thy life, and in each day, for thee, to know thine old friend, and to make uſe of him. If God be but as man, drawne dry with gifts, what doeſt thou pretending to truſt to him? If he be a fountaine, why ſhouldſt thou ſuſpect him, or thinke him ſufficient to pardon ſuch ſin, and no more, to purge ſuch corruption and no more, to deliver from ſuch a danger, and no more? What a ſtraitning of unlimitedneſſe and All-ſufficiencie is this? If thy ſelfe ſhouldſt ſow thy Corne upon a well-tilld ſoile, wouldſt thou limit providence to ſo many buſhels the Acre? If thou ſhouldeſt have *Iſaac* his increaſe, an hundred fold, wouldſt thou grudge it thy ſelfe? No, herein thou canſt enlarge Providence beyond ordinary, beyond reaſon, and there is no end with thine appetite. But tell me, I pray thee, upon what ſoile hath the Lord ſowne his promiſes? Upon thine, or Chriſts? If upon Chriſts, as he ſaith, all promiſes are *Yea* and *Amen* in him, what ſeed comes amiſſe to his ſoile? Hath not his blood made the ſoile of Promiſes rich? Can any crop be reapt off this ſoile, but plentifull? No, except thou ſuffer it to ſhale and to fall to the ground for lack of reaping. Look thou to thy faith, that it hold on with the Lord, and doe not ſmite the earth thrice, when God

Amplification of it.

Jer.2.13.

Gen.26. 12.

2 Cor.1. 20.

2 King.13 19.

God intends thee ſix or ſeaven deliverances. This gives life and heart to thine enemies within, to the ſworne adverſaries of Gods truth and thy comfort, without, that thou canſt not get breath enough to get up the hill of promiſes? For if thou couldſt, thou ſhouldſt bring down thine armfull of performances. Every one that lookes on thee ſhould count thee an happy man, and wonder at thee as *Naomi* wondred at *Ruths* lapfull of corne. Not thy gleanings, but the Lords powrings out muſt make thee rich: Firſt, learne to gleane, and at laſt God will give thee full meaſures, heaped up, ſhaken and running over. Every man applauds the rich Merchant for his happy Ventures, and admires him for his richneſſe in ſilkes, velvets, and other commodities of far countreyes: But thou ſhalt be an happy man for richer wares. Oh (ſhall men ſay) how rich is ſuch an one become in performances? How is he furniſht with all Gods coſt? What graces hath he not got? What luſts hath he not ſubdued? How hath God held him up by the chin in all his troubles, to make him cheerfull, meeke, and patient in them? How doe his enemies ſinke and fall downe, and worſhip at his feet? How have his afflictions ſet a new hue upon him, and made him a far more humble, diligent and zealous Preacher and profeſſor of the Goſpel? Brethren, we are caſt upon ill times, and live in a hard world, 2 Tim. 3. 1. yet we are not ſo quite ſtript of examples in this kind, but we might pick out ſome ſuch, if we could obſerve them. Oh brethren! All things are ours, if wee in Chriſt: All the crop of his rich ſoile is thine, if thou have the capacity of faith to beſtow the ſame in. *Paul*, *Cephas*, *Apollo*, all gifts of the Miniſtery, all Ordinances of Word and Sacraments, all the graces of the Saints, their whole communion is thine, to doe, to ſuffer, to perſevere. The heads of the enemies of Gods Church are all thine, and ſhall be caſt thee over the wall, if thou wilt beleeve. The promiſes in Chriſt are a rich Lordſhip (a *nemo ſcit*) of wealth and welfare: and thou ſhalt ſay with *Iacob*, I have enough Lord, I never looked to ſee thy face; and lo, now I ſee thy children brought upon my knees! Happineſſe it ſelfe could make me no happier then thy performances have done. So much for this.

2 King

Chriſt makes the ſoile of promiſes rich. Ruth. 3. 16

1 Cor. 3.

Gen 47. end, and 48. 11.

Luſtly, this ſhould ſerve for encouragement, thankes and conſolation to all ſuch as have taſted how good and gracious the Lord hath been unto them in the performance of promiſes. Surely, the publicke fulfillings of promiſes to the whole land and Church, ſhould deſerve it at thy hands, and much more thoſe which thine owne ſoule knowes beſt, thou ſtandſt bound unto him for. Even this preſent mercy (Brethren) which now we enjoy in the ſeaſon of the yeare. How many have fretted the ſoule of God all this Summer, by their wofull unthankfulneſſe, becauſe that wee have had ſad wets, (and not without cauſe for our drunkards ſakes;) therefore many of us ſay, Wee ſhall loſe our Harveſt to yeare. What? Canſt thou not truſt God in that promiſe of ſeed-time & harveſt, which is abſolute, and depends not upon thy faith? Well, now at the laſt God hath heard us when he had us at the vantage: and this might occaſion the recording of many former deliverances. What hath been the cauſe of Gods detecting ſo many traytors to our Prince & State, and giving us their necks, ſave the faith of Gods people which hath noted his mercies? Why ſhould he elſe juſt in the nick of our enemies inſulting pride in 88. and ſince in this helliſh treaſon of the Powder, ſtep in & ſtop that fatall hand? Since, how many droughts, famines, rumors of wars, peſtilence, bad ſeaſons, hath the Lord turned away from us? Should we confine our thanks to one day in the yeare? And

Vſe 9. Conſolat. Gods people ſhould be encouraged.

1631.

Gen. 8. 22

Thankfull and comforted by the faithful performing of promiſes.

2King. And put caſe that ſtill many Popiſh enemies lie at our root to kill it, and to endanger our liberties, ſay that many ſorrowes are ſtill upon us; is it not becauſe we have made waſh-way of all ſorts of performances, and made them common things? How hath God magnified his arme in thoſe publick faſts of ours lately ſolemnized, beſides our private extraordinary praiers by our ſelves? When met we but the Lord gave us in ſome anſwer more or leſſe? And how have we requited him for it? Were it not juſt with him to give us quite over, as them Judg. 10. 13. for our Idols, our covetouſneſſe I meane, formality and hypocriſie? Might he not, as Pſ. 80. 4. be angry with our prayers? Might he not laugh at our miſery, and leave us to cruell enemies, and forraine invaſions, who have been ſo weary of his own yoke? Oh! let us humble our ſouls to the very duſt, that we have requited him ſo baſely, and deſerved that he ſhould change his performances into revenges and penalties! you poor heare, who ere now ſaid, you could not chuſe but ſtarve this deer year, how fare you now, the danger is overpaſt? God hath performed as much corn as can ſtand on the ground to rid you of fears: will you now forget him as formerly? Remember your covenants! Oh that our powder were not danke, and our hearts unfit to take fire, and to burne out with praiſes! nay hath not God betruſted many of us here with more then ever we looked for! ſuch wives, ſuch children, ſuch patience in our revolts, ſuch addition of life, when we lookt to have beene cut off by violent feavers, conſumptions, yet reſtored to live 7. 10. 20. years after, with unlooked for liberty in our Miniſtery and Profeſſion! may we not ſay with *David*, It was little to thee to build me a ſure houſe, but thou wouldſt alſo take in my poſterity to covenant for two or three generations! If a Gentleman ſhould give his poor friend a ring of 20 s. and put it into a pearl of 20 li. that friend would thanke him though he ſaw nothing but the gold only, but when he ſees the jewell too, doth he not ſtand and wonder? Shouldeſt thou do leſſe to the Lord for thoſe unexpected favours given thee as an overplus to his Chriſt? What ſhouldſt thou do, but take up the cup of ſalvation, & praiſe him! thy worſt day is better then the beſt of ſuch, as I ſay not, want theſe bleſſings, but ſuch as have them caſt in upon them as common caſualties, not as performances. I had rather be the ſcullion in a great houſe, with poor bleſſings from a fountaine, from faith in a promiſe, then the Noble man himſelf, without the favour of the giver: had not *Obadiah* a better portion then his Maſter? let thine eſtate be never ſo mean, yet if the Lord have granted thee this entercourſe, and intelligence with heaven, thou haſt great cauſe of thankfulneſſe. And to conclude, let us all ſay as *David* did at the foot of his ſong, Our truſt ſtandeth in the name of the Lord. For time to come, ſhal I ever cavill againſt thee, O Lord, who haſt beene ſo faithfull? Shall I call thee to my tribunall, if at any time thou ſhouldſt try me with ſome darknes of promiſes? am I not bound for ever to wait both in mine own behalf, and the behalf of the whole Church to truſt thee, as a God that keepſt touch? nay, who haſt oftimes performed promiſes, whenas I have but poorly concurr'd with them by faith; put caſe thou ſhouldſt do as *Iacob* did to *Ioſephs* brethren, lay thine hands a croſſe, the right upon *Ephraim*, & the left upon *Manaſſe*; ſay thou ſhouldſt in particular croſſe my own contents, delay my praiers, and eſtrange thy ſelfe for a while from me in wonted performances; is it not enough for the cleering of thy faithfulneſſe, that thou haſt ſo long bin faithfull? Is not my experience ſufficient to binde me to thy faithfulnes for ever? So much ſhall ſerve alſo for this laſt Uſe, & ſo for the whole Doctrine, and for this time.

Alſo humbled for their provokings of God to the contrary.

9

1 Chr. 29. 14.

Pſal. 116. 10.

1 Kings 18. 3.

Pſal. 132. 11, 12.

Gen. 48. 18.

THE

THE TWO AND TWENTIETH LECTVRE, Continued upon this VERSE.

VERSE XIV.

Then Naaman *went downe and waſhed himſelfe ſeven times in* Iordan, *and behold, his fleſh came againe as the fleſh of a little child, and he was cleane.*

THe laſt day (Beloved) as you may remember, I made an end of the former Doctrine, iſſuing out of the ſucceſſe of *Naamans* waſhing: To wit, that Gods performances are alway as good as his promiſes, if not better. Now the laſt point of the whole verſe, and ſo, of the third generall part of this text remaineth to be handled. And that is grounded upon this, That now after *Naamans* faith and fruition of the promiſed cure, wee heare no more of his old diſtempers, his cavils, his rage and turning from the Prophet. All is now quite changed with him, as for ſorrow and former trouble all is blowne away, as if it had never been. The point is of ſingular conſequence, and it is this, The ſoule that can caſt her ſelfe nakedly upon the bare promiſe of God, may be ſure thereby to loſe all her diſtempers, which (under her unbeliefe) aſſaulted her: and to drowne them in the promiſe. And this point I will firſt ground upon Scripture and reaſon: Secondly, anſwer a queſtion or doubt: Then come to ſome uſe. For the ground of the text, it is cleere: For we ſee that according to the promiſe of *Eliſha*, ſo it came to paſſe. After his waſhing himſelfe, we heare of no more diſtempers: all are gone: wee heare of the returne of his fleſh as a childs: we heare not of the remainder of his paſſions. For other texts: Take that place, *Eſa.* 26. 2. *Salvation will God appoint for wals and bulwarkes:* What is that? The Church under the Goſpel ſhould faſten upon

Eſay 26.1,2,3.

2 Kings

on the promiſe for ſalvation: and this ſhould fence out all her troubles and former enemies, as a Wall or a Bulwarke, keepes out any affronts, and *verſ.* 3. *Thou wilt keepe him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee.* As the needle of the Diall ſet juſt on the North point, ſettles and ſhakes not: and as the Anchor holds in the Ship from floating up and downe: ſo the promiſe faſtned upon, ſtabliſheth the ſoule from her former wanzings, and unſetledneſſe. And the reaſon is more fully ſet downe in *verſ.* 4. *Truſt yee in the Lord for ever, for the Lord* IEHOVAH *is everlaſting ſtrength:* that is, he is reall in all his promiſes, and gives a being to them, as being ſtrong enough to doe it. Hence it is, *Eſa.* 55. 4. That the Lord Jeſus in the offer or promiſe, is called a *Witneſſe: Behold, I have given him for a Witneſſe to the people:* And in *Revel.* 1. *That faithfull and true Witneſſe:* Why? becauſe he is Yea, and Amen, all the promiſes of God in him, become ſo. Now, as a Witneſſe in the Court, who is ſworne, and without exception, decides the Controverſie betweene two at oddes: ſo the promiſe beleeved, quits the ſoule, and puts an end to ſtrife. So in the *Hebrews*, the promiſe beleeved, is compared to a City of refuge, which reſcued the poore man-ſlayer, whoſe heart was full of feare, and diſtreſſe, becauſe of the purſuer; but there he was free: even ſo, the oath and promiſe of God, received into the ſoule, determines all doubts betweene the Lord and her. It is ſaid of *Hanna*, that ere *Eli* had reſolved her from God, of a ſonne, ſhee was full of trouble in ſpirit: But, when once hee had ſatisfied her, lo, then ſhee was cheerefull, and look'd no more heavily: even ſo is it with the promiſe faſtning upon the ſoule, it cauſes the waves and ſtormes of an unquiet heart to turne to a calme. *Hezekiah* was mightily troubled upon the meſſage of death; but no ſooner came *Eſay* backe againe, with the newes of his recovery, and the ſigne of the Suns going back, but *Hezekiah's* moane was turned to a ſong. So is it here. For is there not more in a promiſe of Chriſt, and preach'd to the ſoule in his name, then in all the promiſes of ſpeciall deliverances, which were more darkly derived from him? Yes verily. Hence it is, that the Prophets never deſcribe the power of Chriſt in his word, but they runne very much upon the deſcription alſo of this effect, of chaſing away of all ſpirituall diſtempers. Upon all the glory, ſhall be a defence: and there ſhall be no more weeping, nor mourning upon his mountaine. In ſtead of the Bramble, ſhall be the Myrtle, and in ſtead of the Thorne, ſhall come the Firre: What's that? all ſhall bee new, the face of things ſhall be changed, Teares ſhall be wiped from all eyes: with many ſuch phraſes, as come not to mind: each chapter is full of them. So *Job* 22. 29. When men are caſt downe, then thou ſhalt ſay, There is a lifting up, and hee ſhall ſave the humble man. Lo, conſternation and terrors ceaſe by beleeving. So *Pſal.* 32. 6. *For this cauſe ſhall every good man pray, in a time of finding: The flouds of great waters ſhall not come neare*

Eſay 55. *ult.*

neare him. And examples are as evident as other Scriptures. How was *Cornelius* by *Peter*, the *Eunuch* by *Philip*, the *Jaylor* by *Paul* and *Silas*, freed from their doubts and demurres, and ſet at liberty?

Reaſ. 1. Reaſons are many and weighty. Firſt, this appeares by proportion: if we compare the priviledges of Beleevers together, we ſhall find, that there be as many as concerne them in point of freedome from their inward diſtempers, as outward enemies. But the beleever is really ſet free from enemies, Devill, curſe, law, wrath of God, an evill world, the gates of hell: elſe whence come thoſe triumphs, *O death, where is thy ſting? O hell, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſinne, and the ſtrength of ſinne is the law* (incenſing ſinne;) *But thankes be to God, &c.* Now, if redemption deliver us from enemies, (ſo that they ſhall not hurt us) from all croſſes, ſtraits, tribulations, (ſo that they ſhall not ſeparate us from the love of God) ſhall not then Juſtification free us from inward horrours, feares, guilt, doubt of conſcience, rebellion of ſinne, cavils, prejudice, and diſtempers? Shall not reconciliation ridde us of our enemy, and that ſhame and confuſion which ſinne brought upon us? Yea much more, for both come from faith.

Reaſ. 2. Secondly, the contrariety of eſtates proves it, before and after faith. The condition of the wicked is, That they can have no peace: there is none to them, *Eſay* 57. *ult.* becauſe as the winter aire is never temperate, by reaſon of thoſe moiſt and cold vapors which annoy the aire with winds, tempeſts, froſt, and ſnow, and the like: ſo the coaſt of their ſpirits can never be cleare, becauſe of the guilt of their conſciences: they may now and then pleaſe themſelves with a little truce, but ſtill warre returneth, the dint of their feares is not broken: So on the contrary, There is no warre to the ſoule that beleeves. As the aire perfectly clenſed in the ſummer, is ſetled, and affords a continuall calme, ſo doth the conſcience of a beleever. Now and then may be over-caſtings of clouds, but the dint of guilt and wrath is gone.

Reaſ. 3. Thirdly, elſe we ſhould aſcribe more to particular promiſes and the effect thereof, which are weaker, then to the maine promiſe, which is the *Reuben*, the firſt borne of God, and the ſonne of his ſtrength. But we ſee what particular promiſes have done to them who have beene under ſad diſtempers by affliction: Of *Hanna*, and *Hezekiah*, I have ſpoken before. Adde another: The Lord promiſed the *Iſraelites*, that upon the ſprinkling of their door-poſts with the bloud of the Paſſeover, the Angel of the Lord ſhall paſſe over their houſes and ſmite none of them: Did they find any diſtempers poſſeſſe them, when there was out-cry throughout all *Egyt* in every family? No ſurely, they ſlept ſweetly in their beds. Did they doubt of the victory againſt *Ai*, when as they had received a promiſe of victory? or were they afraid as at firſt, when thirty of them were ſlaine? No. When the promiſe was made of the fall of the wals of *Jericho* by the ſounding

Exod. 12.

2 Kings

of Rams hornes, and compaſſing the City ſeven times, did the people ſtagger at it? were they not reſolved? And ſhall not the maine promiſe of God remove diſtempers within, as well as afflictions without? yes, and much more.

Reaſ. 4. Fourthly, the contrariety of corrupt infidelity, and the power of the promiſe doth evince it. The ſtrength of infidelity ſtands in bearing downe the word. Whatſoever diſtemper of heart can be mentioned, either ſelfe, carnall reaſon, rebellion, or the like, comes from the not ſuffering the word to enter, but holding it out at ſtaves end. Now then muſt not the word of promiſe beleeved become as contrary to her? Why did *Micaiah* ſo ſcare *Ahab*? Becauſe he never ſpake well to him. So why doth the grace of faith ſo ſcatter theſe diſtempers? Becauſe ſhe ſpeakes all againſt them, overthrowes and reſiſts them. Contraries have mutually the ſame reſpect in their conſequencies. The diſtemper of an unbeleeving ſpirit, alway beares downe the word, till the word (as the ſtronger man armed with the power of Chriſt) doe foile her, and ſtrip her of all. The weapons of our warfare are not carnall, but ſpirituall, able to caſt downe ſtrong holds of corruption: Sinnes weapons are carnall, Gods are ſpirituall: Therefore there is no proportion in the contrariety: God will divide the ſpoyles, that is, ceaſe the diſtempers. The reaſon appeares from that ſpeech of *Jonah*, They that embrace lying vanities, forſake their owne mercy: But I will looke toward thy holy Temple, and promiſe, and thereby abandon them. Each deſtroy the other.

Ionah 2.8.

Reaſ. 5. Fifthly, the promiſe drownes all former diſtempers, becauſe it performes that really, which ſelfe and corruption beare the ſoule falſly and erroneouſly in hand withall: Theſe afford the ſoule a rotten peace, a deceitfull content, vaniſhing, and ending in ſorrow. See *Eſay* 50. 11. But the word doth it really, and ſurely, no more to be infringed. No more hungring or thirſting, if once ſatisfied with this bread and water of life. The text imports it, *Naamans* ſervants here tell *Naaman*, That which all thine owne diſcontents and humours could never miniſter unto thee, that the obeying of the meſſage will really afford thee. See *Act.* 13.38. That from which you could not be juſtified from by the law of *Moſes*, by this Man, every beleever is juſtified: All at once ſet free from outward enemies, and inward diſtempers.

Reaſ. 6. Sixthly, the experience of the Saints proves this; who, till they have caſt anchor upon the word, and ſettled upon this center, could never find reſt in all the circumference (as I may call it) of your owne beſt ſelfe, your goodneſſe, affections, gifts, or duties: *Bellarmine* himſelfe confeſſing, that in reſpect of the uncertainty of our good workes, or elſe the perill of vaine-glory iſſuing from thence, it is moſt ſafe for us to rely upon the ſole and meere mercy of God: the bare word of truth and promiſe. How much more then ſhall Gods people ſay, If it had not beene for thy word, I had periſhed in my affliction? This is to a poore ſoule,

ſoule, as the chaire of Saint *Peter* is to a deluded votary, the determining voyce. All eternall, immutable things comprehend and devoure the fading and changeable, but cannot be comprehended by them, nor reſiſted by their oppoſition.

Reaſ. 7. Many branches

Laſtly, the maine and chiefe reaſon of all is, becauſe the word and promiſe of God, is not the bare letter of words or ſyllables, but furniſh'd with all the power and authority of God: ſo that, who ſo clings and cleaves to it, is out of his owne keepe, and under the Lords. There is (as our Saviour ſpeakes) ſpirit and life, in all which he ſpeakes. This may appeare to us in theſe foure ſpecials.

Ioſ.

Firſt, in the wiſdome thereof: This way of God croſſeth all other wayes, and hedges the ſoule out from all ſound comfort by them, only faſtning it upon this. As *Paul* cals the Goſpel in this reſpect, the wiſdome of God: caſting downe all thoſe devices of mans wit, wil, works, or wayes, by which fleſh would ſet up a peace and eaſe of all diſtempers to her ſelfe. There is no doubt, but the erranteſt hypocrite living would gladly (if he could) by his ſmoothing with his owne falſe heart, come to a kind of ſetling, that he might no more be troubled: But it is as the ſowing of a new peece to an old garment, and the rent becomes the worſe. Even as a ſhort narrow Map of a Shire makes every petty cottingers lands to vaniſh, and cauſes him to account himſelfe a ſtarke begger, lord of a Mole-hill, not worth the owning: So doth this way of God force him; who thought himſelfe no meane man in his Religion and hopes, to ſeeme a ſtarke foole in his owne eyes. For why? hath the Lord revealed the way to life, by the reall death and reſurrection of his onely Sonne, glory being made ſhame, and holineſſe ſinne, and eternity death, to ſatisfie juſtice: and ſhall I play the Mountebank, and thinke to ſatisfie by mine owne trickes and devices? Oh foole, oh beaſt!

Branch 1.

1 *Cor.* 1.

Secondly, in the righteouſneſſe of God: As the Sunne is able by his heat to licke up all the dew of the earth, and ſcatter all the miſts of the aire: and the Sea is able to ſwallow up and devoure whatſoever is caſt into it, never to appeare more: Even ſo, the merit of Righteouſneſſe and Sanctification by our Lord Jeſus (compared oft to both theſe in Scripture) is able to licke up and diſpell all the moſt deſperate feares, doubts, and diſtempers of the ſoule. So *Paul* ſpeakes, Whom God ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his bloud, to declare his righteouſnes. What righteouſneſſe? Surely the equalneſſe of pardoning them who are of the faith of Jeſus, becauſe he hath received a full ranſome: elſe (ſaith he) if he ſhould not juſtifie ſuch an one, he ſhould not be juſt. So full a content hath Chriſt given his Father for ſinne, that if the Father ſhould not acknowledge it ſufficient, he ſhould doe Chriſt wrong, and if he ſhould not impute it to a poore ſoule that beleeves, he ſhould doe the poore ſoule wrong, nay, having freely yeelded his Sonne and received the price, for that very end, he ſhould doe himſelfe infinite wrong, by unfaithfulneſſe.

Branch 2.

Rom. 3. 25.

2 Kings

fulneſſe. But there is no ſuch feare. The Judge of the world will not do unrighteouſly: he will not condemne the righteous and the unbeleever alike. For he hath accepted his Sons death, as a ful diſcharge. If we ſhould receive a ſumme of money for the uſe of an Orphan, and when the Orphan comes of age, ſhould detain it, ſhould he be righteous? Mercy then is of free gift: and faith is a free gift: But juſtification of a poore ſoule for Chriſts merit, is an act of righteouſneſſe. So 2 *Cor.* 5.20. 21. Be reconciled to God. Why? Becauſe he hath made him ſinne, who knew none, that we might be Gods righteouſneſſe.

Branch 3. Thirdly, all other properties of the promiſer, are included in the promiſe, as the truth, faithfulneſſe, mercy, love, (greater then that of the creation) and all the reſt ſcattered in the booke of God, his eternity, and unchangeableneſſe, and the like, are all in the Word: See 1 *Tim.* 1.15. *Pſal.* 25.10. 1 *Pet.* 1.25. with ſundry others. So that the ſoules doubts and diſtempers may eaſily be caſt upon ſuch promiſes (for ſo the Apoſtle cals them, 1 *Cor.* 7.1.) as are built upon ſuch foundations.

Branch 4. Fourthly, God hath ſtrength in his hand to doe this, whatſoever Satan, hell, law, or wrath ſhould ſay to the contrary. I ſay he hath enough to warrant that he hath done, againſt all oppoſers. See *Eſay* 27.4,5. Anger is not in me: why? Lay hold upon my ſtrength, and make peace. The ſatisfaction of Chriſt, is the ſtrength of mercy, as truly as the law is the ſtrength of ſinne. The arme of mercy is ſo ſtrong, through this, that the ſtrong arme of juſtice cannot pull it away from forgiving a poore ſinner: but mercy will ſtill be above, and will not be beaten downe, but prevaile againſt juſtice, yea triumph againſt judgement. By this ſtrength then which overcomes juſtice, ſhall not the diſtempers of the ſoule much more be vanquiſhed and overcome?

Branch 5. Laſtly, the intent and purpoſe of God, is by his promiſe, to doe this favour for the ſoule, even to put it out of all doubt and queſtion, and to breed aſſurance in it; *Heb.* 6. That by two things (the word and oath of God) wherein it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have full aſſurance: and ſo twice more in that Epiſtle he ſpeakes. The meaning whereof is, As ſurely as I from all eternity did intend it, in the foundation of mine election, that is, my Sonne: as verily as I accepted it at his hands, when he offered it up by his eternall ſpirit, as verily as I offer it to my Church under the word of truth, which cannot lie, and have pawned my Miniſters credit upon it, that, except I ſpeake truely, they are errant diſſemblers; as verily as now my deare Sonne at my right hand in glory, pleads for poore ſoules, that they may partake it; ſo truly and really, without hooke or crooke doe I intend to ſhew them mercy. Why ſhould not every one then that needs it, faſten upon it, and drowne all his diſtempers in it, decide all doubts, and reſt well ſatisfied?

Concluſion of reaſons. To theſe I might adde many mo: As, that the promiſe beleeved, gives the ſoule a full requitall for all which ſhee forgoes: As

Peter

Peter ſaid, We have forſaken all, and followed thee Lord, what ſhall we have? Our Saviour anſwers him, An hundred fold here, and after, eternall life. So, perhaps thou haſt forſaken thy old craſie props for Gods word, what ſhalt thou have? Even perfect peace, that which they could never have bred thee. Againe, I might ſay, That faith enlarges the hidebound and ſhrunk heart, and makes it concurre with the Lord, and equall his bowels. I meane, to be enlarged in her bowels toward him againe: whereas before it was not ſo, but ſhe limited the holy one of *Iſrael*, and reſtrained his compaſſions. Beſides, this word of the promiſe ſets up a light in the heart, above all that light which was there before. We know when it is dark, we are glad of a candle: But when the Sunne ſhines bright, a candle is a poore needleſſe thing, and is drowned by a ſuperiour light: So here, a blind, dark, deluded heart is glad of any dimme candle of its owne, to make it thinke it ſees: but when the word comes, that dimme light vaniſhes. Theſe and many more I might adde: but theſe are ſufficient. I haſten to the queſtion and objection, and the anſwers of them.

The Anſwer to a Queſtion.

Here then firſt it may be asked, But may a poore ſoule truly loaden with her owne ſinne, and under a condition of a promiſe, be ſubject to ſo many diſtempers? I anſwer, yea ſurely: as in the wombe, the woman that is conceived with child, yet ere the fruit be perfected, feeles abundance of inward griefes, and pains, ſtrugglings and wreſtlings, ere the fruit be come to the full ripeneſſe: But when it is once come to that, the former diſtempers ceaſe: Even ſo is it here: Till faith have formed the ſoule to a true quietneſſe and ſetling, there cannot chuſe but be many feares and turne-againes, although the ſeed be caſt into the wombe really. But what are theſe? I anſwer, Such as theſe (I may referre them to theſe three heads for order ſake.) Firſt, erroneous conceits on the right hand, proceeding from ſelfe-love, flattering it ſelfe, by her hopes, her morall qualities, her negative abſtinences, opinion of her religious duties, her affections, complaints, her liking of goodneſſe, flaſhes of joy, and the like. Oh! how can ſhe chuſe but doe well? how can ſhe be out of the way? Then muſt thouſands periſh, if ſhe be wrong. She is not ſo ſinfull, that ſhe ſhould put Gods mercy too farre to ſtraine it ſelfe! (Ah poore wretch! thinkeſt thou to fare well by making God leſſe work, or by making thy ſelfe to need him above all ſinners? The Word goes not by thy ſmall ſinne, but by the graciouſneſſe of the promiſer) So alſo, of this ſort, are all mixtures of ſelfe, and ſoderings againſt the Word; hoping that ſuch a degree of deſire, or ſorrow, or ſelfe-deniall will ſerve, although it have no roote in the Word, nor continue: Seeking God ſo farre as will hold with ſuch a luſt, liberty, or evill cuſtome; To ſticke to our old condition, though we find it craſie by the Word: and to be unwilling to goe any further, and to ſtrippe and bare herſelfe of her owne bottome, that Chriſt might come and take poſſeſſion. But deſperately to venture, and caſt all upon hazard, if I be not well,

In three kinds. 1.

let

2 Kings 2.

let all goe, I will take as I find, but I will altar none of my course. This for the first sort.

Secondly, there are distempers on the left hand (for the soule is hurried with extremities on both sides, till she beleeve) I meane with bondage as well as boldnesse: Of this sort are all base feares, and wicked conceits against our selves, That we are the unhappiest of all men, of more aversnesse to Gods will and way, then any men or women living: That our corruptions are baser then any: our natures more crooked, inconstant, awk, and perverse: that such spirits as ours, so sly, subtill, and lewd, cannot belong to God: For then some restraining grace or other would have kept us all this while. (Why oh poore soule, is it not as much for the glory of mercy to save a crooked spirit, as a streight? dost thou so looke upon thine owne ends, that Gods are forgotten?) Also, a false opinion of Gods enmity toward us, because we feele our selves as corrupt and hardhearted as ever, little amendment in us; but much what the same, under long hearing, many mercies, patience, crosses, meanes of grace: What should this argue, but that our hearts are given over, and left of God? Surely if he had chosen us, we should not be thus. Some there must be, after all costs and trials, who must be left in their hardnesse of heart, and none more like to be of that number then such as we feele our selves! So tempted to vile thoughts, to lewd lusts and affections: So many backwarder and further off then we (in shew) yet have beene brought home to God before us: Many of our time, age, and condition, battered, broken, and humbled, but our hearts remaining as hard as ever, and will not melt: Wee have had more tendernesse, then now we have, and if then we could not beleeve, how should we now? We could have prayed, fasted, mourned, better then now we can, we are now tempted to give over all our hearings, Sacraments: we therefore feare all hope is past, we neglected the special season of mercy by our dalliance, and now it is too late. So much for the second.

3. Thirdly, from this longsomnesse, and wearinesse, the soule growes to disquietnesse of temper, to tedious sorrowes, bootlesse afflictings and baskings of it selfe, and that by any occasions of another nature, any accidentall crosses, melancholy, discontent, and wearinesse of our selves, of our lives, wife, children, trade, and converse with men, conceiting our selves to have no right to any of these, and therefore they will but encrease our judgement: better it were therefore to make a riddance of our selves aforehand by violent drowning, stabbing, stifling of our selves, then to beare it out to the uttermost: Or else distemper may expresse it selfe otherwise; by anger and vexation with our families, and servants, quarrelings with Gods Minister, sometime bodily distempers grow upon such, they cannot sleepe, cannot follow their callings, walke idly and joylesse, mopish, are afraid we shall be bereft of all we have, and come to shame: or at least die before ever we get grace or hold of the promise. This also for a draught of the third.

Now

Now I ſay for concluſion, the word of Promiſe ſatisfies the ſoule in all reſpects, both leſſer and greater, ſo that now the poore creature is like *Peter*, *Act.* 12. out of his walking ſleepe, when the Angel was gone, and came to ſee that cleerely, which before was as a ſhadow: So the beleeving ſoule by this light of the promiſe, and by this ſword of the ſpirit diſcovers and cuts off her annoyances, here one, there another, as a ſtrong man might cut off theeves aſſaulting him, one by one, at a narrow wicket: And, we might exemplifie all theſe by Scripture, brethren, if time would permit, take one text for all, Thoſe in *Hoſea*, when once God humbled them, and enlightned them, they could cry out, *Aſſur* ſhall not ſave us: we will not ride upon horſes: now we ſee, that with thee the fatherleſſe ſhall find mercy, we will breake off all our falſe hopes, and caſt away our covers of ſhame, and thoſe props of our owne, whereby we hoped to releeve our ſelves without thee, now we will abandon, and renounce them all. A maine place for the proofe hereof. And ſo much for the anſwer of the queſtion.

Now alſo a doubt here ariſeth, which in a word I will reſolve, and then come to the uſe; The queſtion is; If the Word ceaſe all diſtempers, how comes it to paſſe that the Saints are ſo moleſted with them after their beleeving? for, how many doubts and feares, objections, temptations, and luſts, befall the beſt? I anſwer, this will be reſolved by like Scriptures: He that beleeveth in me, he that eates of my fleſh, and drinkes of my bloud, *Iohn* 6. ſhall hunger nor thirſt no more: How is it then, that our hunger abides all our life? I anſwer. He ſhall hunger no more, deadly, diſtruſtfully, mortally: but hopingly, beleevingly, and ſavingly. So here. Theſe diſtempers may now and then ariſe: but not as formerly: then they were generall, reaching to our eſtate: now onely particular, about our actions, our comfort, as ariſing from ignorance, errour, or ſpeciall diſtruſt. Againe, then they came from our owne principle of heart and mind corrupted: but now they proceed from concupiſcence and the remainder of old *Adam* in us, which cannot doe other: Satan alſo incenſing it, and cauſing it to preſent it ſelfe ſo much the more rankly, by how much he feares his owne diſpoſſeſſion; But now, faith our new principle cauſeth an holy Requiem in the ſoule: ſo that it may ſay truly, as he ſpake baſely, Soule, take thine eaſe: Thou haſt goods laid up for many yeares. So I ſay ſome bounſings and clatterings the Devill may cauſe at our doores: but the peace of God which hath calmed all diſtempers before we beleeved, ſhall alſo allay and ſcatter all our miſts of darkneſſe afterward, as they ariſe, and maintaine perfect peace. For why? This is the firſt fruits of that peace which we have in our conſcience, toward God, through juſtification: even as the eares of corne which the Jewes brought to God, was a pledge unto them, that they ſhould have the poſſeſſion of the whole crop. Laſtly, I anſwer, that by this doctrine I meane not that a Chriſtian doth cut off all diſtempers

2 Kings

ſtempers ſo, that whether he beleeve or beleeve not, ſleepe or wake, he is ſure for ever after. No, in no wiſe. But, that ſo long as he holds cloſe to the word, there is power in the word to effect that continually, which it effected at the firſt: Chriſt and his promiſe, is Yea and Amen: yeſterday, to day, and the ſame for ever: but how? provided that the ſoule lie ſtill as cloſe to the promiſe to day as yeſterday: that it ſee as much need of it to diſpell unbeliefe, feares, unquietneſſe this day, as heretofore; and waxe not looſe and preſumptuous, which is the way to expoſe the ſoule to temptations, or elſe to nuzzle it up in a rotten quietneſſe for the time which will breake out againe after. But as we ſay to a Tradeſman, or others, Keepe your ſhop well, and that will keepe you: neglect it, and that will give over you: ſo here, Tend the promiſe, and you ſhall find ſufficient in it, to uphold you in peace, and to keepe off thoſe flies of Beelzebub, which were wont to annoy you: But if you ceaſe your worke, wonder not if your diſtempers returne: for (although there were no enemies without to moleſt) there is enough from within a baſe heart, to create pudder and unſettledneſſe to the ſoule. And ſo much for the Anſwer alſo to this Queſtion. Now I come to ſome uſe: and indeed, the uſe is very weighty and manifold.

Uſe 1. Confict.

And firſt, this point argues the ſleightnes of ſuch as being urged to beleeve, anſwer thus, So we would and ſhould, if we could be rid of our accuſing thoughts, fearfull diſtempers which do moleſt us. As if a man waking at midnight, ſhould ſay, If mine eyes were not ſhut, it would not be ſo darke. Whereas the cauſe is in the night, not in the eye: for if it were day, the eye would ſee well enough. They make the effect the cauſe, and the cauſe the effect. If thou couldeſt beleeve, thy diſtempers would vaniſh: therefore remove that firſt: Take out the beame, and thine eye will ſoone be lightſome: The want of faith cauſeth ſuch a multitude of diſtempers to annoy thee, and the gift of faith would clenſe the coaſt. Beginne then at the right end of the ſtaffe, and let not errour beguile thee.

Uſe 2. Inſtruct.

Secondly, this doctrine may give us a good Receit againſt Melancholy. A diſeaſe which every man cries out of, but few know how to heale, and fewer apply the remedy. Some tell us, Melancholy will have her courſe when all is done: the beſt cure is, to be patient, till the fewell be ſpent. Others tell us, we muſt be merry and cheerefull: as if a man ſhould bidde a man whoſe legges are cut off, to goe of his errand. Others make ſhort work of it, and thinke nothing but riddance of their lives will ridde them of it. I doe not now ſpeake of the meere bodily humour, I leave that to the Phyſitians Art: I meane ſuch accidentall Melancholy as befals men from the ſadde reflecting of their condition upon their owne thoughts, till they have brought themſelves into a maze of confuſion. Whither this ſorrow be carnall, or godly, either indirectly cauſed by ſuch diſeaſedneſſe of body, weakneſſe of conſtitution, loſſes, reproach, as beginnes to worke the heart

to

to a conceit of Gods diſpleaſure: or ſuch depth of Melancholy as ariſeth from a long and unprofitable ſtruggling with our ſpirituall diſeaſes, without finding any iſſue. The beſt cure of both theſe, is by faith in the promiſes. That onely (like that ſword of *Alexander*) can cut the Gordian knot in pieces at once, without picking it out. Men ſpend themſelves infinitely about the thought of theſe ſadde dyſaſters, and what may come of them, how miſerable a plight and pickle they have brought themſelves into: As if a man fallen into a deepe Well, ſhould cry out and tell folke a long tale how he fell in: but ſtill lie there, and deſire no man to hale him out. But the beſt remedy is, to cure one contrary by another. Guilt and feare, an unquiet conſcience, is that which cauſeth thy Melancholy: All is not as thou wouldeſt have it, thou feeleſt not thy ſelfe as thou wouldſt be: Why? what wouldſt thou be? merry, cheerefull, a free man, ridde of thy chaines: Well: goe to that which onely can eaſe the ſoule of all her diſtempers: that is, get the promiſe of Chriſt, grounded upon the ſtrength of the ſatisfaction: beſtow thy plodding thoughts upon a new ſubject: ſay thus to thy ſelfe, Did God indeed of his owne accord cut off his owne quarrell, when he might have deſtroy'd me in a moment? Hath he appointed his owne juſtice a ranſome, that he might have ſtrength to reſiſt and diſanull it? Doth he offer his bare breaſt and heart of love to be ſeen by every poore ſoule that is in ſtraits for want of it, and knowes not whither to turne it ſelfe? Doth he bidde ſuch a ſoule drowne all her guilt and feares, in this free and full good pleaſure of his, to be reconciled with her? May ſhe beleeve, that the requiring of this price of his owne Sonne, will ridde the ſoule of her debt, and diſcharge her of it? Set thine heart then deeply upon this meditation: pray God to turne it off from the ill cuſtome of thy diſtempered thoughts, and noyſome feares that poſſeſſe thee: And if thou canſt but obtaine this grace to divert them thus, I ſay unto thee, That through Gods goodneſſe, a quarter of that needleſſe and diſtreſſed plodding of thy miſery might drowne thy diſtempers in the bottome of the Sea, and turne thy Melancholy into freedome and joy. For why? ſo ſaith my doctrine, Truſting to the Word, will ridde the ſoule of all her diſtempers.

Thirdly, this point ſtrongly confuteth that Popiſh tenet, That no man can come to know himſelfe certainly to be in the ſtate of grace and favour with God: but we muſt alway be in doubt, betweene hope and feare, and that's the beſt way (they ſay) to hold us well occupied, to keepe us in a wholſome awe and feare of our corruptions, and to exerciſe us in the practice of repentance. But as for this faith to ridde us of our diſtempers, that they call a fancie, and that a dangerous one, as provoking a man to looſeneſſe and preſumption. But, (O yee hypocrites) dare you thus diſhonour that bleſſed truth of God (built upon ſuch ſtrong foundations) as to detract from it the maine prerogative of ſtabliſh-

Verſe 3. Confut.

ing

2 Kings

ing the conſcience? Shall the Promiſe have no more power in it, than the vaine and carnall preſumption of an unſound heart? Shall both alike leave the ſoule in ſtaggering? Farre be it from us to yeeld ſo prophane an abſurdity. As for your revelations, which you ſay have beene given to ſome ſpeciall Saints of God, to aſſure them of heaven: although wee grant, that *Peter* and *Paul* had greater meaſure of aſſurance, and more than ordinary freedome from theſe diſtempers, yet we affirme that the evidence which they had, came from no other revelation, than that which the Word breedeth by the the concurrence of the Spirit, which is no other than faith: and as for that greater meaſure of full aſſurance of the Spirit, it was wrought in them by the promiſe and faith receiving the ſame: for the Spirit, although it be above the Word (ſimply conſidered) yet it is not without the Word. Neither is that Spirit ſo peculiar a thing as is onely given to ſpeciall men: but even to ſome of all ſorts of beleevers, even ſo many as it pleaſes God to ſtabliſh after they have long clave to the truth and faithfulneſſe of the promiſer. So *Paul* ſpeakes *Eph.* 1. *By whom* (the Spirit) *you were ſealed after yee had beleeved.* But to leave theſe deafe Adders, who will not be charmed: what ſhould it need to trouble us to heare them ſpeake againſt the power and authority of the Word, who (if the Word ſhould prevaile) muſt forfeit their Kingdome of Traditions & unwritten verities, wherewith they embondage the pretious ſoules of them whom Chriſt hath redeemed? This Word of God (which they ſo bitterly declaime againſt) being that eternall truth which ſhall ſurvive all their inventions: and that breath of the mouth of God which ſhall one day conſume, whatſoever hath ſet up it ſelfe againſt the comfort of a poore ſoule, and the glory of the riches of Grace. Meane time we abandon this their conceit, as the moſt horrible cut-throat of the Conſcience, and the greateſt tyranny in the world: to wit, That a doubting and diſtempered creature, wofully tired with her eſtate, muſt be compelled to returne to her old miſery, with an encreaſe of her bondage worſe than Egyptian.

Epheſ. 1.

Uſe 4. Terror.

Fourthly, this is Terrour to all hypocrites, who preſumptuouſly will beare themſelves upon the Word, boaſting that they have got a promiſe from God, and they are called to beleeve, they may beleeve, & they muſt beleeve: They have had troubles as many as the moſt men have had, but God bids them drown them in the freedome of his gracious promiſe, and therefore ſo they will. And although there were but three ſaved, they claime to be of that number; no man ſhall beat them off. But as *Samuel* ſaid to *Saul*, when he pretended he had obeyed the command of God, *Whence then is the bleating of theſe ſheep, and lowing of theſe oxen?* So ſay I to theſe, if you have beleeved the Word of God indeed, whence are thoſe privie nips of your conſcience, which do ſo continually aſſault you? Whence are thoſe terrours of heart, with which many of you are met with, when you would faine

faine be at peace? When you are in the middeſt of your eaſe and jollity, your liberties, your ſports and pleaſures, whence come thoſe cold qualmes over your baſe ſpirits, barring you out from peace and faſtning terrours upon you, ſtronger then you can reſiſt? Dare you pretend your ſelves beleevers, when you feele ſtill your old diſtempers to toſſe and turmoile you, and to hold you downe with ſtrong hand in ſecret? If they whom the Sonne hath freed, are free indeed, whence is your ſlavery? No, no, you do but ſet a good face on it; you make faire weather outwardly, but hatch inwardly ſuch a viper, as will fret your bowels, and deſtroy you: it is one thing to ſmother and choake your feares, and beare downe your diſtempers, another to drowne them in the ſea of the promiſe: you have other delights to fill your hearts withall: the Lord would have ſet on the worke of the law more throughly, and made you more to ſtinke in your owne noſtrils, and to prize the Word of God, and the promiſe of eaſe, if ever you had beene truly loaden; But ſithence you would have both your luſts, and the promiſe too, holding a wolfe by the eares, which you are loath to forgoe, and yet cannot well keep, know, that you deceive your ſelves in boaſting that you hold cloſe to the promiſe: for they that do ſo, may loſe their diſtempers therein, which you keepe ſtill. It is true, That the Lord would have all his (as *Eſay* ſaith) count it their ſtrength to ſit ſtill: But how? not in a chaire of eaſe, pretending a freedome which you never had, and favouring your ſelves in any forbidden vanities of your owne envie, luſt, pride, revenge, and the like. But the ſtrength of a poore ſoule, is to ſit ſtill in reſpect of her cavillings, and fightings againſt the truth of the promiſe. Perhaps you will ſay, you do ſo, and feele no ſuch matter in your ſelves, but are quiet and ſecure. But I anſwer, your peace is not ſound, there is a crack in it, as appeares by this, That you walke not as Gods free-men do: you are as cloſe to God in your love, in your tenderneſſe, in your humble carriage, as you would pretend to be in your beleeving. No man can palpably diſcerne the Devils chaines upon the Lords free-men. Wherefore to conclude, I ſay to you, as he to that meſſenger, *What haſt thou to do with peace? turne thee behind mee*. Oh, theſe are the daies wherein the moſt vile and preſumptuous hypocrites catch at a promiſe, and beare downe their conſciences! But be not thou (O Chriſtian friend) like to them, for their & diſeaſe, wound is but healed deceitfully, and ſhall breake out againe moſt deadly, when they ſhall not be able to reſiſt it, except it pleaſe the Lord to ſend them, upon better conditions, to claime the promiſe. So much ſhall ſerve for this Uſe.

2 Kings

Joh. 8. 30.

Uſe 5.

Fifthly, this bitter reproofe of all ſuch, who (in the judgement of Charity) do beleeve and cleave to the Word, yet will not be drawne from the bad cuſtome of their former doubts, conceits, and diſtempers; but ſuffer Beelzebub ſtill to light upon their ſore, and to moleſt them, and gall them ſtill. Oh! what

2 Kings

a dishonour is this to the promise of God? still to hold a secret correspondence with Satan, and to nourish our old picking of knots, and answering of feares by our owne blanching wit and devises, yea spending houres and daies wearisomely in setting our owne wit and invention on worke to beat off our objections, and thinking they have done themselves good service in the meane while. Whence comes this? surely by your weakenesse, and relapsing from your former hold of the promise: This selfwit and will, is so naturall, that we are prone and propense to revolt and roll backe unto it, as fast as the Lord seems to settle us by his Word: it is an inbred evill, alway fighting against the law of faith: as it is easie for a woman to go to a pond or pulke standing neere to her doore (though the water be not so good) rather then to goe to a fountaine of living water further off: Ease and ill custome are inchanting enemies: But remember, that onely that blood of sprinkling hath in it a sure bottome of staying feares, so that the soule may be quiet from the destroying Angell, and the out-cries of Egypt: Could they (who never had the experience of such a thing before) yet so confidently venture their lives upon the Word: and shall such as have (in likelihood) approved this promise of God by experience, and ventured themselves upon it, and felt it a soveraigne remedy against their distempers, returne to tread the maze of their old confused thoughts the second time? As if the Word had suddenly lost her strength and virtue to sustaine them as formerly? Shall forgetfulnesse, melancholy, temptation, corruption, ill custome, be able to pull them from an assured hold of rest, to assured vexation and distemper? I speake it (brethren) upon knowledge: It hath beene thus, and is thus with many, through a wearisomenesse of this spirituall trade of beleeving; that men grow into a very falling sickenesse in this kind, that is, such a custome of wofull doubtfulnesse, and distempers, that they seem to delight in it. Alas poore soule! dost thou thinke that to be presumption in thee which the Lord himselfe calls confidence? or because, perhaps, thou feelest the dregs of a bold heart, still abiding in thee, hast thou no other way to avoid a shallow, save by running into a gulfe? If the Lord be willing thou shouldst hold thy peace upon the naked termes of his offer and promise, seemes it too good for thee? or if it be, must thou needes undervalue his grace by thy baseneſſe, as if it were too great for him to bestow, because it is too good for thee to enjoy? Know it, from the ground of this doctrine, the Lord delights as little in this practise of thine, as thou seemest to delight much in it. And although I deny not, but in respect of thy weakenesse, there may be some place for pity, yet there is more cause of sharpe reproofe: For why? Didst thou never beleeve the Word? deceive thy selfe no longer, and put away thy distrust from thee. But hast thou beleeved? (for so thou didst pretend) then trust the Lord still, and say with him, Why dost thou thus fret (O my soule) in my breast, and recoyle against that which hath formerly

ly ſatisfied thee? Turne rather thy vexation into prayer, and ſay, Remove theſe unpleaſing chaines (Lord) at laſt, and ſet mee at liberty: ſhew me this wiſedome from above, not onely barely to cling to it, but alſo to improve it ſo, as to feele the power of it, to ſhut out my baſe diſtempers out of doores, and there to hold them out roughly, by the advantage which I have gotten by thy Word. Let not the blind and the lame come any more at the City of *David*, it is no place for them. As thy Word prevailes, ſo let doubts and diſtempers ceaſe, and hold this ſea of my troubled-heart in that calmeneſſe which thine owne voyce once cauſed when thou rebukedſt the waves thereof. So much for this.

Uſe 6. Admonit.

Sixthly, this is Admonition to all that would find the Promiſe, to caſt out all their diſtempers, that they beware of all ſuch lets as keepe them from cloſing with the Promiſe. Commonly according to our faith, ſo is it with us. Therefore let us take heed of whatſoever might cauſe us to warpe from the Promiſe. For as it is in the graffing of a ſien into the ſtocke, if any thing fall into the cleft of the ſtocke, which holds off the ſien from cleaving cloſe to the ſtocke, thereby it comes to paſſe, that the ſap of the ſtocke comes not at the ſien to nouriſh it: and ſo in ſtead of growing one with the ſtocke, it is ſeparated therefrom, and withers away: ſo is it here. Whatſoever it be that keeps off the ſoule from claſping to the Promiſe, let us ſtudiouſly caſt it out, leſt the ſoule returne to her old diſtempers, and communicate not of the ſap and virtue of it, to ſuſtaine her in hope and comfort. Who would loſe his labour in ſo weighty a caſe as the returning back of ſuch an enemy? Who would not be at any coſt to be rid of it? We have a common ſpeech, That a man muſt make a ſilver bridge for an enemy to eſcape away, on condition wee may be troubled with him no more: So if God will chaſe away our diſtempers, and help us to beat them downe from flying (like bees) about our eares, let us be at ſome coſt to furniſh our ſelves with ſound faith in the Promiſe. And whatſoever it be that might keepe the heart away, and cauſe it to lye looſe to the promiſe, let us be aware of it, and abhorre it. Here ſome may aske, What are the uſuall lets of this grace of faith, from comming into the ſoule? *Anſw.* I will mention ſome few of them, before I conclude the uſe. The firſt is Mindleſneſſe, and Heedleſneſſe of the Promiſe: we count it not as it is, a large thing, but as a ſtrange thing. Nay it were well if we beheld it ſo, for ſtrange things are beheld with ſtudiouſneſſe. But rather, as a ſlight common matter. Get we therefore ſound judgement of this Medicine, and judge of it, as a thing which will worke wonders. Wee ſhould magnifie it (in this reſpect) in our owne eyes: it is ſaid that the Lord magnified *Moſes* and *Joſhua*, when as at their word the Sea and Jordan went backward, and became a wall on both ſides of them, that they might goe over dry-ſhod. If the mouth of a Promiſe be ſo honourable, what is the word of the Eternal God?

Lets of beleeving. 1.

2 Kings

If the feet of them be beautifull that utter it, what then is the meſſage? If Heathens would ſo beautifie theſe Idols which they worſhipped, the better to draw their affections, how ſhould wee ſet up the Promiſe, as worthy our beleeving? Truly I may compare it to many things. It is like *Moſes* his ſpeech to the Iſraelites, *Stand ſtill and behold the ſalvation of God, for thoſe Egyptians which you ſee this day to purſue you, you ſhall never ſee more.* Oh! if the Promiſe were ſo beheld by us, as the arme of Gods power able to drowne all our diſtempers, as in a ſea, that wee might never ſee them more: What a bleſſed ſight were it? Behold it then (as they did) and take good marke of it, as a thing not to be ſlighted over. So it is ſaid of our Saviour, that his word rebuked the ſea, and her waves, ſo that there was a great calme. And the people were amazed at it, ſaying, *Who is this, that even the ſea, and the tempeſts obey him?* So ſhould we be aſtoniſh't to thinke of the power of a promiſe, ſaying, what ſpeciall thing is it, that turnes ſuch diſtempers of ſpirit into ſuch a calme? Its like to the hands of *Ananias*: which being laid upon *Paul*, cauſed the ſcales to fall off his eyes: So ſhould the promiſe cauſe thy ſcales of errours, thy feares, thy qualmes and diſtempers to vaniſh. Behold it as a rare medicine which hath cauſed all the feares of the people of God to ceaſe, and to turne to ſweet eaſe: *Davids, Hezekia's, Jonah's, Pauls*, theirs of Samaria at *Philips* preaching. Its like to *Peters* preaching to that ſame City, at the beleeving whereof the inchantments and deluſions (wherewith before the whole city was gulled) became as ſmoake in the aire. Its like a certaine Court-Lady, called *Jane Make-peace*, of whom in the ancient Engliſh Chronicle its recorded, that ſhee was of ſo ſweet and amiable a nature, that whatſoever quarrell fell out in the Kings Court among the Nobles, or in the Family, ſhe preſently tooke it up, and made all quiet. This is truly the Lady *Make-peace* betweene God and the ſoule, diſpelling all doubts of conſcience, and making it quiet againe. Do we take her to be ſo, and ſet by her, and is ſhe ſo beloved, and bleſſed a thing in our ſoules as that Lady was among all the Courtiers. Surely then her worth would procure honour and eſteeme from us: and we ſhould not paſſe by the promiſe ſo ſlightly as wee doe. Our giggiſh heads have not the gift to obſerve a Promiſe: we are as *Naaman*, ſo full of his crotchets, ſo looking another way, that his ſervants are here faine to tell him of it, and ſay, Father, thinke better of the Prophets words, do not ſlight them over ſo. Verily, till this be effected, that the Truths of God beare eminent note in our eye, there is ſmall hope of doing us good. Wee heare twenty Sermons of Promiſes, ere our eye be turn'd the right way. They are as beames, and we make them but as moles. Get we bookes of promiſes, and turne our eye off, the whiles from other objects, that theſe may be dwelt upon.

Act.

2. The ſecond is Forgetfulneſſe. Wee digeſt not the promiſe, when as we have once obſerved it. Wee ſuffer it to leake out as water

water by the chinkes of a veſſell. It becomes as meat to an ill habited ſtomach, which regorges it as faſt as it receives it, and ſtayes not till it be altered. Many pageants wee will looke at for the pleaſantneſſe of them, which yet we inſtantly paſſe over. But the Promiſe doth us no good, nor can eaſe us of our diſtempers, till it abide in us. Our Saviour oft preſſeth this, If my Word abide in you, you ſhall be my Diſciples. Let the Word dwell (*Col.* 3.) As the miſers cheſt and coffers is fraught with gold and pearles, ſo ſhould the ſoule of a good man with the promiſes, it ſhould be his Treaſure. Pondering of the Promiſes, is as the retaining of the ſeed, which cauſes the wombe to conceive. Meditation and weighing of the promiſe, is as the cleane beaſts chewing of the cud, till it be almoſt made milke. We are weary of the promiſe, as they of Manna; our ſoule loathes this dry Manna. But as the Lord ſhames them for that, by ſhewing how many wayes Manna might be dreſſed, baked, fryed, parched, it was good any way: ſo may I ſhame us: the promiſe may be taken up as a cup by many handles, and that fitly: whether we thinke of it, as the fruit of Gods decree to ſave, or of the Lord Jeſus his death (in which it is ratified:) or in the Fathers acceptation: or in the Miniſters fidelity: or in the Lords prevention of us, the wiſedome, and other properties even now named: or our owne deſolation without it: or the Saints generall claſping about it: or the univerſall ignorance, unacquaintance of the world with ſo ſpirituall a ſubject: ſurely, every way wee might heale this diſeaſe of our little muſing of it. But above all, if the freedome from all our old diſtempers, did preſent it ſelfe to our minds: How do men plod upon Purchaſes, Pleaſures, Honours, becauſe thereby they imagine that they ſhall become new men, and that they ſhall live no longer as they have done, baſely, poorly, mopiſhly? So ſhould the new happy life of faith (no more to lead a ſad, diſmall life) affect us. *Nineveh* could turne her thoughts from plodding feares, and look up ſaying, *Who knowes if he will turne from his fierce wrath, and we periſh not?* They muſed of the happy eaſe which a ſecret hope would effect. And are wee ſo farre from faſtning theſe cords of direct promiſes, about our armeholes? It is a harſh worke to the fleſh, but ſweet to the ſpirit: and although the gains be ſlow, yet if they be kept together they will make a heavy purſe; when as the neglect of this work wil leave the ſoule beggerly, & to her ſhifts. Therfore wait upon thoſe doores, & at thoſe poſts of Aſſemblies, upon which the Proclamations of Heaven are fixed, & think thy ſelf ſafe when thoſe nayles given by the Maſter of them, are driven faſt to ſticke in thy ſoule, that they may not eaſily be unſettled. So much for the ſecond.

Matt. 12.

Jonah 3.

The third is eſtranging of our hearts from the promiſe, and growing out of acquaintance with it: ſo that we grow not more and more into a promiſe, to know the worth and ſweetneſſe thereof. Contrary to this is the welcomming and entertaining of the Promiſe. The which phraſe the Apoſtle uſes in that place

3.

2 Kings

1 *Tim.* 1. 15.

of *Timothy*, *This is a faithfull saying, and worthy all entertainment:* the word there is taken from Inne-keepers who ſtand at their doores or gates of receit, with both armes to welcome and lodge travellers. Such a traveller the Promiſe is: going up and downe ſeeking where it may be entertained. Juſt it is with God to hold us to hard meat (brethren) and to ſtraiten us in this point, and I pray God it be not the lot of this place to be bereft of this traveller, for theſe forty years hath he gone up and downe among us, ſeeking who are good hoaſts, and finding few: And becauſe the Lord hath pind his promiſes upon our ſleeves a great while, wee waxe ſhie of them, and thinke we may have too much of them. But woe unto us if thoſe pathes which have beene trodden bare by the feet of the Meſſengers of God, become overgrowne, and lye unoccupied, as ſhe ſpeakes *Judg.* 5. for want of travell: I tell you, good gueſts finding bad hoaſts are grieved, and ſoone ſeeke them places of better reſort and welcome. So many as have received him among us, have loſt nothing, ſave our diſtempers and corruptions, which we were clogg'd with, for this gueſt brings glad tidings, and expels all ſorrowes and old inmates which diſtempered the ſoule. Let us therefore beware of this unhoſpitalneſſe, and grow glad entertainers of this gueſt, the beſt which ever came within our doores. Grow we as familiar and entire with the promiſes, as the world is ſtrange and aloofe from them. Elſe our uſuall diſtempers will be ſure to haunt us, whole moruings, dayes, and nights, while they have tyred us; But if the Promiſes be preſent, and our doore ſtand ever open for them to enter, and loath to leave them, our old crochets will have ſmall joy to ſalute us, their roome will be better then their company. The ſoule is carried along with deluſions of ſelfe, and moleſted either by falſe feares, or falſe hopes, as we read of *Siſera's* mother and her Ladies, *Judg.* 5. She was alwaies ſtaggering betweene two rockes of feare and hope, loth was ſhe to thinke the worſt, and yet afraid of the worſt: ſhe was willing to thinke that her husband would come and bring home his garments of divers colours, captives, and ſpoyle. But then ſhe thought his charet wheeles ſtaid too long: thus was ſhe willing to beare her ſelfe in hand with the beſt, both ſhe and her falſe Ladies, till the worſt affronted her. Oh (brethren) what a wofull life is this, for ſuch as may live a better! Who would be a ſtranger to this Poſt from Heaven, comming with ſwift wings and healing in them; alway bringing ſound intelligence from thence, and ſupporting the ſoule with aſſurance that it is well betweene God and the ſoule? Who would not do as *David* did, I have made thy Word my Counſeller, to paſſe my matters? Do Clients keepe themſelves aloofe from their Counſellers? Do Patients make ſtrange to the Phyſitian? or do friends alienate themſelves from friends? Oh! we count the Promiſe a ſtrange thing, which in truth by this time ſhould have bin as ſweete unto us as the honey, and the honey combe: as ſweet and ſweeter then ever our deluſions were!

Iudg 5.

Mal. 3.

Hoſ. 8.

were! And we muſt thinke this will coſt us good inuring and acquaintance. Our old gueſts have the birthright, and long have taken up the roome: it will coſt time to diſlodge them againe: Therefore (to end this) let us (if we would ſhunne the ſurfet of our old diſtempers) grow inward with the promiſe, and as *Iob* ſaith, let us acquaint our ſelves with God; Till he come and ſay, This is your refreſhing, to give over your owne torrents and violent ſtreames, and to embrace the waters of *Siloe*, which runne ſoftly: let us make the promiſe our Companion, let it be both of our Court and counſell, let us empty all our mind into the boſome thereof, and hide nothing from it, let us diſcover all our doubts and diſtempers unto it: for it hath (as *Salom.* is ſaid to have) the wiſdome and treaſures of God, to ſupply us: Marke it, a Miniſter of the promiſes is as a ſcare-crow to the people, they care not how little they acquaint with him: And as ſcarce one of forty knowes a Miniſter or a Prophet in the name of one: ſo few know or receive a promiſe in the name of a promiſe: much leſſe doe they make toward it, and uſe all meanes to ſcrue themſelves into it, as thoſe Greekes, *Iohn* 12. 21. who to get into Chriſts company, ſought firſt to *Philip*, and he to *Andrew*, and then both brought them to Jeſus. Such Mediation would help us to this Counſellor. So much for this third.

Eſay 28. *Eſay* 36.

Iohn 12. 20, 21.

4.

To haſten, another let is unconvincednesſe of heart by the promiſe. A fearfull ſinne: when men will not admit the Word to prevaile ſo farre with them, as to debate the matter ſeriouſly with themſelves, till it have left a convincing evidence behind it that their eſtate is warrantable: But ſuffer themſelves to dance in a net, and to lie in an ambiguous and doubtfull ſuſpence, and uncertainty, when by taking paines and laying themſelves in the ballance of the Sanctuary, they might find themſelves either not to have to doe with the promiſe, and ſo amend their defects: or elſe to be thoſe to whom the promiſe pertaines, and ſo reſt ſatisfied, and ſet their hearts at reſt, as convinced that it is theirs. Oh! it's a diſeaſe ſo naturall unto us, that it is hardly rooted out, *viz.* to pleaſe our ſelves with the conceit that all is well, and our diſtempers ſhall ceaſe: but not to try our ſelves till wee bee convinced. Give me leave to tell you (brethren) this dallying with a promiſe, and not going through-ſtitch, will breed you ſorrow in the end. Not long ſince, the report of a ſtrange accident came to mine eares, of a certaine Gentleman who was in love with a Virgin of good ranke, to whom he had long made love, and thinking all cock-ſure, becauſe ſhe made very faire correſpondence toward him, he beganne to pleaſe himſelfe in his fond humour, and gave himſelfe ſuch content in his hopes (without any ſadde enquiry of her finall conſent to marry him, which might eaſily have beene had, if he had followed it) that he furceaſed, as one that might have her at his command. The Gentlewoman perceiving that he did not carry himſelfe throughly in the buſineſſe, nor as one that reſolved to come to an iſſue, ſet her heart

2 Kings

heart upon another lover, of more ardent affection and reſolution. This meſſage being brought to the Gentleman, as he was playing upon his Lute, ſo ſmote him, that he daſhing his Lute, and breaking it into fitters, forthwith went out of his right wits. The promiſe is like to this Virgin: ſhe ſerves to be married really, and not alway to be dallied with. She loves that the ſoule ſhould make towards her with affection; but when the ſeaſon is come, that the bargaine ſhould be made up, and that the ſoule be convinced of her good will to marry it, ſhe cannot endure any dalliance or paltring. If then the ſeaſon be neglected, and the ſoule grow to take things for granted, withont any ſerious triall and concluſion, ſhe turnes another way, and enclines to marry one who will beſtow more hearty love upon her. Beware (good brethren) of this dalliance: they who deſire to be eaſed of the diſtempers of the ſingle eſtate, and to live in a ſetled courſe, muſt wiſely take the opportunity and ſeaſon which God offers, and embrace it: leſt after, their ſorrowes returne double and treble, and when they would faine proceed, it be denied them. We ſee ſingle perſons withſtanding good offers, lie by unregarded, till they repent them. Men love a ſtaggering courſe: whereas, when they feele their neceſſities to pinch them, and to ſend them to God for eaſe; and not ſo onely, but the Lord reveales the promiſe with a great deale of ſweetneſſe and delight to them, ſo that their hearts grow very farre in love with it, prize it, and thinke no paines or coſt too great for it: then ought they to diſcerne the ſeaſon of the Sonne of man, and to apply themſelves ſeriouſly and ſadly to take the opportunity. Then ſhould they come to a point with the Lord, and with all humbleneſſe and wiſdome, ſay thus, O Lord thou haſt ſaid, that a loaden wretch ſhall find eaſe in thee, a fatherleſſe creature left and forſaken of all proppes, ſhall find mercy with thee: If I deny that thou haſt made me ſuch an one, I ſhould lie, for I lie under a burden intolerable, and the hearſay of thine eaſe hath drawne me after it, with an unfeigned, reſtleſſe, and hungry heart: therefore what more can be ſaid, but it is of thee, that I am the party? What have I to ſay to the contrary? Thy truth is without hooke or crooke: none more needing, none ſuch a ſinner as I; none ſo faithfull as thou, none ſuch a God as thou, to pardon and ſubdue ſinne: Thou haſt therefore done this (O Lord) as I conceive, becauſe thy meaning is to ſave me, and bind mine heart for ever to thee: I can neither ſay more nor leſſe, but it is from the Lord, and if he will doe it, what is freer then his gift, or ſtronger then his will? I am content that my will be borne downe by it, and bee as one bound, both hands and feete, unable to reſiſt. Thus the ſoule which deſires to come to an iſſue with God, diſcourſes from point to point with it ſelfe, till it grow convinced: Even as *Judah* ſeeing the cloak, ſignet, and ſtaffe brought forth, acknowledged how the caſe ſtood, and yeelded. And *Haman* hearing that ſuch and ſuch an intent the King had to honour a favorite, by and by laying

laying things together grew to thinke, Whom would the King ſooner honour then my ſelfe? That which he weakly, and from the mutable favour of a man (whoſe breath is in his noſtrils) concluded erroneouſly; that doe thou gather infallibly from the mouth of a God, whoſe love is unchangeable, and ſo let thy ſoule be at quiet, as *Rebecca's* was, when it was agreed upon, that ſhe ſhould marry *Iſaac*, there was no dallying admitted, but inſtantly, and undelayingly ſhe goes to him, and becomes his wife. Oh brethren! we are making the match off and on, all our life long, ſtill asking, ſhall I, and ſhall I? Oh I could beteame it! and never come to an end: and thereby, come infinitely ſhort of that comfort of our union and fellowſhip with God, which elſe might be enjoyed. To end therefore, let us no more conſult with our owne baſe, dallying, laſie ſpirits, but begge that ſpirit which onely can convince the ſoule of righteouſneſſe, and never lin, till our gadding and vaine hearts be ballanced and perſwaded to ſettle once for adoe upon the promiſe, as truly convinced that it is ours. So much for this fourth. *Iohn 16. 9.*

The fifth is a cowardly heart, that dares not venture, nor caſt it ſelfe upon God, but chuſes rather to lie frozen in her owne dregges, then to venture her life, and hazard her ſalvation upon the promiſe. How can ſuch a ſoule chuſe but keepe her diſtempers ſtill? Whereas Gods poore ſervants, have an heart of courage given them to caſt the hardeſt. Brethren, I feare many of us, were never in *Naamans* caſe. Doe but a little conſider of it. The caſe with him, ſtood juſt as ours doth. *Naaman* here hath an incurable diſeaſe: which none can heale, in all the world, ſave one man: He comes to him, craves a cure: receives anſwer, *Go waſh*: The meſſage pleaſes him not: he frets and ſtampes, that it is no eaſier, no more liking to his humour; hereupon (more looking at his humour then his diſeaſe) he is ready to fling away in a rage. His ſervants come about him, and tell him, Maſter, if thy diſeaſe might be otherwiſe cured, it ſkill'd not greatly to turne homeward: but the matter is conſiderable, here we are, on the one ſide pinched with a leproſie incurable, on the other, offered a remedy that likes us not: in this caſe either we muſt reject it, and ſo we are ſure to keepe our diſeaſe, or we muſt accept the remedy; What ſhall we here doe? Thou ſayeſt the remedy is unlike, uncertaine: be it ſo, but the leaving it is aſſured and deſperate miſery. Whether of the two ſhall we take? Shall we preferre certaine ſorrow to uncertaine good? What folly were that? Perhaps we may goe to *Iordan*, and come back as we came: grant it: it is but a peradventure: for perhaps we may ſpeed: If we ſpeed by going, we are made: if we ſpeed not, we are not undone, we ſhall come backe no worſe then we went. Therefore there is three to one, for our going: let us deny our tech, our conceit, and diſtemper, let us but venture it, and caſt the worſt: but home (in any caſe) let us not goe, without trying the remedy. Hereupon he adventures, and finds it as the Prophet foretels. Juſt ſo is it with a poore ſoule. 5.

2 Kings

2 Kings

ſoule. Feare on the one ſide, leſt God his word ſhould deceive it, doth diſmay it from attempting the promiſe: on the other ſide, hope to ſpeed doth encourage us: What ſhall we doe? Surely, let the poſſibility of ſpeeding, the deſperate impoſſibility of ſpeeding any other way, and, that our venturing cannot make us in worſe caſe then we were, (it may make us in much better) prevaile with us: If we muſt be miſerable, let us fall into the hands of God; if we muſt periſh, better that his hand caſt us away, then our owne diſtruſt: if he can be unfaithfull, well may we be miſerable (for our owne guilt, and not his unfaithfulneſſe hath made us ſo:) Therefore, how ever it be, let us venture our ſelves rather upon a poſſible hope, then lie ſtill in aſſured miſery. This is the very ſtate of it; and by this we may ſee what the wofull condition of an unbeleever is: He doth as *Naaman* would have done, (if God had given him his will) he chuſeth to lie under his load, as the Aſſe in her ſlow, without ſtriving to get out: nay, preferreth a ſullen humour of diſcontent, before the adventuring upon Gods way: that is to ſay, aſſured miſery, before poſſible remedy. In other caſes, no man will be ſo fooliſh. Take an inſtance. In the great famine of *Samaria*, there ſate two Lepers at the gate, of all others moſt ſure to ſtarve: It comes into their minds, that their caſe was deſperate: and that any termes were to bee choſen before dying in coole bloud: Let us (ſay they) go offer our ſelves to the Campe of our enemies: if they ſave our lives, we ſhall live; if not, we are but dead men: we were better be ſlaine out-right then die here. Hereupon they ventured, and lighted well. Conſider we well of this: Shall fleſh and bloud in a caſe of life and death, venture upon a poſſibility, rather then lie ſtill in aſſured miſery; venture without any promiſe; nay venture upon an enemy? And ſhall we be ſo baſe, and cowardly in the caſe of our immortall ſoules, as to chuſe rather to periſh where we lie, then to venture our ſelves upon a mercifull promiſe, upon no enemy, but a Father, who aſſures us that we ſhall not onely not be worſe then we were, but happy and forgiven? Who ſhould be ſo foole-hardy, but one that was never put to throughly, in the ſenſe of his unavoidable miſery? If the party purſued by the avenger of bloud, ſhould (having advantage of ground of the purſuer) wilfully have lien downe in the mid-way, ſaying, I ſhall never get thither, I were as good lie ſtill for naught, as goe for naught, would not any man have thought him a ſenſeleſſe blocke, not affected with his danger? Therefore (to end this) ſeeing there is that in the promiſe, which can remedy us, let us make toward it: and if our baſe ſpirits miſgive us in the entrance, as not knowing the ſucceſſe, yet let our inward diſeaſe thruſt us forward, and tell us, This is no time of quarrelling with God, and keeping of our miſery ſtill, but rather of ſeeking out: worſe we cannot be, better we may be: let us therefore preferre hope before ruine, and ſay, If I muſt needs periſh, I will periſh by venturing, not by cowardize. So much for the fifth.

2 Kings 7.

And

And to conclude, by theſe meanes, let us reſigne up our ſelves to the authority and power of the promiſe, which hath as infinite a ſupply of helpe from a fountaine of grace to anſwer our doubts and cavils as we have of objections to diſcourage our ſelves. And, the rather becauſe it is eternall, to ſurvive all our tedious and endleſſe cavils: Let us claſpe and cleave to this promiſe, as having grounds enough (from the manifold excellencies therein contained) to match our feares: let us conſent to the offer of it, and obey the command of it: let us ſet to our ſeale, that it is true, not onely in it ſelfe, but alſo to us, for our remedy: let us be carried into the ſtreame of it, as being able to turne our ſtreame a quite contrary way: let us lot upon it, ſet up our reſt in it, buy and ſell upon it, as the thing we make full reckoning and account to be happy by: yea, let us plead it, when our neceſsities, carnall hearts, doubts and feares doe put us to it, as thoſe who will not eaſily forgoe their right in it: and ſo hold it, as that which the Lord our God hath beſtowed upon us, and therefore (as *Iphta* once ſaid) we will poſſeſſe it, and not be beaten off from it, whatſoever any enemy can ſay to weaken it. Thus much for this Uſe of Admonotion may ſerve. *Iudg.*

The next is Uſe of Exhortation to all ſuch as either doe deſire to feele: or ſuch as have felt this benefit by the promiſe already to free them from their diſtempers. The former to refuſe no pains to get faith: the latter both to bleſſe God for that liberty, yea to truſt him for the true peace of Conſcience iſſuing from faith: and alſo to rely upon the promiſe for a riddance from all future diſtempers which may ariſe from revolts, temptations, or croſſes, throughout their courſe. *Uſe 6. Exhortation. In 2 Branches.*

Let me ſpeake a word of both. For the firſt, let every poore ſoule be encouraged to breake through all difficulties, hindring the ſoule from beleeving, becauſe the fruit recompenceth the coſt. I remember, how one of the poore Martyrs encouraged his fellow (the one being a blind man, and the other a lame) being at the ſtake, Be of good cheere (ſaith the one to the other) we have a ſharpe breakfaſt, but we ſhall have a ſweete ſupper: my Lord of *London* (*Boner*) ſhall heale me of my blindneſſe, and thee of thy lameneſſe, in a ſhort ſpace: Could a poore blind creature encourage himſelfe againſt the fire, for the hope of freedome from his blindneſſe, and count a bloudy wretch a good Phyſitian in that reſpect? What ſhouldeſt thou doe then, for the hope of riddance from thoſe diſtempers, which have hindred thine inward peace, and have held thee downe all thy dayes till now? Oh! how good a Phyſitian ſhould he be, and how bleſſed a medicine ſhould that be, that ſhould ridde thee from them? 1.

Secondly, how ſhould thy loynes bleſſe the Lord for this mercy? How precious was *Eliſha* to *Naaman* for his cure? how beautifull ſhould the feete of them be that bring glad tidings of peace? But eſpecially what experience ſhould this worke, in time to come, in all ſuch, as the Sonne hath thus freed? What 2.

Giant

2 Kings

Giant ſhouldeſt thou feare, having overcome the Lion and the Beare? What after births and paines ſhould affright thee, having eſcaped the chiefe paines of travell and birth it ſelfe? It is ſweete to thinke how ſtrong the Saints of God have beene, by this experience, and with what triumph they ſpeake of this deliverance. As *Paul* in 2 *Cor.* 1. Who hath delivered from ſo great a death, who doth deliver, and I am perſwaded will deliver! And yet who had ſuch after reckonings as he had? So often in ſpirituall deſertions, in ſoule-buffetings, in perils by land, ſea, enemies: he was much in labour, in travell, often ſtoned, impriſoned, perſecuted: yet (ſaith he) out of all theſe the Lord delivered me; yea, and ſtill will, to his glory, till my worke be finiſhed: Thus the Church ſpeakes *Pſal.* 123. That if God had not beene of her ſide, the waves had ſwallowed her up: and yet God had broken the ſnare, and her ſoule was eſcaped. And what then? Our helpe (ſaith ſhe) ſtands in the name of the Lord. The poore lame and blind man in the Goſpel, being bidde to come to Chriſt, was heartned on by the ſtanders by: Be of good cheere (ſay they) the Maſter calleth thee: So ſay I, Be of good cheere, If when thou wert yet weake, and unable to helpe thy ſelfe, yet the Lord bare thee through, eaſed thee of all thy diſtempers, when thou ſaidſt, It ſhall never goe well: Oh! what ſpeciall lets by infidelity, feare, and tentation, what ſpeciall riſings up and bubblings up of corruption can he not ſuppreſſe in thee? Now he hath given thee ſtrength and experience by his promiſe, why ſhouldeſt thou diſtruſt him? One ſaith, What can ſeeme great to him, to whom the greatneſſe of the whole world is knowne? So, what can ſeeme tedious to him to overcome, who hath got the victory over his horrors of conſcience, and pangs of a froward ſullen heart through unbeliefe? Let us nouriſh this experience lively and effectually in our ſelves againſt ſtraits, either by inward deſertings, or outward enemies? Our Lord Jeſus felt both upon the croſſe, that we might truſt him for freedome from both: That Croſſe to which he nayled all Devils and men, enemies to his grace, ſhall alſo overcome all their ſecond aſſaults and affronts: and the gates of hell ſhall not prevaile againſt us, if we caſt not away our confidence. Yea, this our freedome ſhall be our earneſt-peny of that peace which the Lord ſhall ſettle upon our conſciences for time to come: a pledge of that eternall reſt, which one day (when he ſhall cleare the coaſt from all tempeſts and blaſts of this world) with full ſerenity and calmneſſe the Lord ſhall tranſlate us unto hereafter. If this Angel ſtand by us, although we were in as deepe diſtreſſe as *Paul*, when no Sunne, Moone, or Starres appeared for fourteene dayes: we ſhall leape up (as he did among a rout of Ruffians and Souldiers) ſaying, I truſt God, that not one haire of our head ſhall fall to the ground. Oh! how well-pleaſing to God is it, that we give not over our hold, and caſt not away our Shield and Sword, when we have greateſt need of it? And ſo much may ſerve for this Uſe.

Laſtly,

2 Kings

Uſe 7. Inſtruct.

Laſtly, this may ſerve for inſtruction, to teach us the juſt proceeding of God againſt all Hypocrites, who reject his Word, in this reſpect, loving their diſtempers ſo well, that they care not for getting faith to be rid of them. The ſoule that longs for faith, longs for peace, and riddance of ſuch ſlaviſh companions: but, they who withdraw from God, and will not beleeve, it is juſt with God, to leave them and their diſtempers together till they cannot be ſeparated. *Ezekiel* ſpeaking of the people of his time, compares them to a ſeething pot, whoſe meat, liquor, and ſcum ſod all together, till they, with the pot it ſelfe were burnt all together. So it is juſt with God, that they, who would not have the precious ſeparated from the vile, ſhould have their owne faith ſtill; and be left to their ſtaggerings, unquietneſſes, falſe caſe, deceits and deluſions, and never be purged from their defilements. *Peter* excellently ſpeakes to this purpoſe, *Epiſt. 1. Cap. 2. 5. 7.* of ſuch as will not accept the Lord Jeſus to be their corner-ſtone of ſafety: Surely they find him a ſtone of ſtumbling and offence. So I ſay to theſe, Since you cared not to truſt in Chriſt, to ridde you of your corruptions, dead hearts, vanities, luſts, earthlineſſe, your unbeliefe, falſe hopes, feares, your owne affections and wayes: it is juſt with God to leave you ſtill to aſtoniſhment and anguiſh of heart: to ſinke and periſh, to fall and be deſtroyed, *Eſa.* 28. by this Rocke of offence. Chriſt is either a Rocke to ſave, or to cruſh in pieces. And I have noted that many Phariſees and Hypocrites, refuſing Chriſt, have turned cavillers againſt the way of God, complainers, murmurers againſt it, as baſe, tedious, and difficult, if not ſcorners and enemies. So much for this Doctrine and Lecture.

2 Kings

THE THREE AND TWENTIETH AND LAST LECTVRE,

Vpon the fifteenth VERSE, and so forward.

VERSE XV. to the XIX.

And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and ſtood before him: and ſaid, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, ſave in Iſrael *: Now therefore I pray thee take a bleſsing of thy ſervant.*

But he ſaid, As the Lord liveth, before whom I ſtand, I will receive none: and he urged him to take it: but he refuſed.

And Naaman *ſaid, Shall there not then be given two Mules load of earth to thy ſervant, &c.*

In this thing, the Lord pardon thy ſervant, &c.

To whom Eliſha *ſaid, Goe in peace.*

Entrance upon this 4. generall.

ALthough Brethren, at my firſt entry upon this text, I propounded no more Verſes of this Chapter to treat upon, ſave what I finiſhed the laſt Lecture: yet, this one day of our Lecture (being the laſt that you and I are like to teach and heare each other) and the laſt of our yeare, requiring that I ſhould ſay ſomewhat unto you: Alſo my ſtudies having reached fully to another Sermon: and beſides this fourth part of the Chapter, craving ſome connexion with the three other handled already: I have ſet apart this day to this end, if God permit: To wit, to handle ſome one ſuch point out of the whole Harmony of theſe five Verſes following, as may give you ſome generall light into the whole context: for time will not permit us to go through all.

One point may give light to all the particulars following, being 7.

Theſe

Theſe five verſes then, as I told you in their Title, containe the remoter conſequences of *Naamans* obedience. To give you a briefe view and taſte of them, theſe they are.

1. Firſt, there is the true ſpirit of the cure to be evidently diſcerned in this new Convert: feeling the truth of the Word in himſelfe, and virtue let out from heaven into Jordan to heale him, he takes it not as a common thing, and like a blocke without ſenſe: but is preſently, and inſtantly, and erreſiſtibly raviſhed as with a new ſpirit, begotten by the worke of God upon his ſoule, as well as his body. The Lord darting grace of mercy and compaſſion into his heart as well as health into his fleſh: (to intimate unto him, by whoſe providence from firſt to laſt he was guided to ſo ſtrange an effect:) Lo, he comes to the Prophet with a ſpirit of impotencie, admiration, and zeale, to acknowledge the Lord, with all fervor of ſpirit, and to knit his heart for ever in love unto him, for this cure of body and ſoule.

2. Secondly, feeling himſelfe unable to reach the Lord himſelfe, he goes to his Prophet, the next inſtrument of his good, forgets his former diſcontent, and entirely embraces him as the Prophet of God, ſent unto him for this purpoſe: and to him he directs his thankfulneſſe, which fell ſhort of God himſelfe.

3. Thirdly, hee enters ſolemne league with the Lord, to be a cloſe client of his for ever: ejuring all former falſe and idolatrous ſervice, and vowing himſelfe wholly to the Lord and his worſhip for time to come.

4. Fourthly, he takes hold and poſſeſſion of the Church of God, acknowledging it to be the onely true Church, and therefore ſcruing himſelfe into it; that although his face was *Aram* ward yet his heart was to *Jeruſalem* ward, and to the true and onely place where the Lord had viſible reſidence and preſence at this time. And this although he teſtified by a weake, and poore expreſſion, of taking with him the earth of the holy Land: Yet the inward ſoundneſſe of heart, exceeded his weake ſignification.

5. Fifthly, he diſcovers his unfained converſion, by a moſt tender ſenſe of that ſin, whereby he had formerly moſt offended God: *viz.* his preſence at the worſhip of *Rimmon*: this darts into his converted ſoule, even as a daſh of the tooth-ach, or the ſting of an hornet.

6. Sixthly, he is exceedingly pierced with feare and care, how he might nouriſh that ſparkle which God had begun in him: and how he might ſhun and prevent that rocke of offence, at which he had mortally ſtumbled before.

7. Seventhly he is very glad to aske direction, while it was now to be had, how he might order his whole courſe for time to come, which being darke and doubtfull for the preſent, hee therefore craves the Prophets advice and prayers: unto which the Prophet gives him a mercifull anſwer. Theſe are the parcels of this fourth generall.

2 Kings

generall. I can but goe over the first.

Doctr. Every true cure hath the spirit of the cure attending it.

The point then is this, Where God workes a true cure upon any soule, there he also workes the spirit of the cure. By a cure I meane conversion of a soule from Idols, (not *Rimmon*, but) lusts and vanities, to the living God. By the spirit of a cure, I meane that instinct and disposition, that due temper and quality which such a cure deserveth at the hands of the cured. And I say not, the spirit of him who is cured, but the spirit of the cure, that is, such a spirit as the mercy of him, that heales the soule, instils into it, *viz*, to be for God, who hath beene for it. Onely this: As Gods cure hath beene gracious, so is the spirit of the cure zealous: and as his worke hath beene entire, whole and unfained to the good of the soule, that it might no more returne to folly, so is the spirit of the cure sincere, intire, & constant. God hates patchery, and halfe cures: and the spirit of the cure hates halfe thankes, halfe love, halfe affections. In a word, the spirit of a sound cure of a soule, is a tender spirit: the very first fruits of the heart enlightned with faith, forgiven, renued, and warmed in the wombe of mercy: the most naturall, peculiar, acceptable, and well pleasing fruit of the soule to God. It stands in a tender love (truly called the first love) a tender joy in God, tender compassions towards him, tender jealousie of that which might provoke him, tender care to please him, tendernesse of spirit both to him in affections of desire and delight, and also for him, in zeale and revenge, defence, and taking up armes for him. And it rests not in him: but descends to a tender love to his Truth, Worship, Services, Sacraments, Sabbaths, Servants, and all which hath any relation to God, even for his sake. This in short is that I meane by this spirit of a cure. I pitch upon this point the more willingly, because it hath an easie comprehension of all those seven consequences of the cure above named. And although each of them be distinct, yet because this is my last Lecture, I am glad that one doctrine hath so good a lot as to give you (though but in generall, and farre off) a view of the whole. For in this spirit of the cure, all those fruits of *Naamans* returne from Jordan, may be coucht together, as a garment unto one knot.

What the spirit of a cure is.

Explication of the Doctrine.

Marke then, for explication sake, thus much. It is with the soule in point of spirituall cure, as with the body, in case of a bodily. Who being heal'd by some odde rare Physitian of a mortall disease, and such an one as all the Physitians in the country could not turne their hands unto, yea such as all others gave over, as desperate, and past their skill: by some odde Physitian, (I say) one of a thousand, who himselfe could not have healed it neither, except he had by divine hand beene peculiarly made and train'd up for the very nonce to be skilfull in such a disease: and such a one as will by no meanes take money or fees, but scornes it, only stands upon doing good, preventing sad wreck of the diseased, that he might get himself a name of a mercifull and skilfull Physitian: Tell me now, what man or woman is there living, who,

having

having ſuch a cure of ſuch a Phyſitian, would or could, or hath the heart to turne away from him, like a blocke inſenſible and naffected with ſuch a favour? There is no ſuch man breathing, I thinke: But this is common: if any get ſuch a rare cure, all is too little to make recompenſe, though he ſhould ſell himſelfe to his ſhirt: he hath no power to do other, he thinkes the ſame evill would take him then. If he ſee that no reward will faſten upon the Phyſitian, but he will needs beſtow it freely, the more his purſe is diſcharged, the cloſer his heart is knit, his affections are up in armes, his tongue is looſed: Oh! what love is this? what moved his heart thus to me? what a man of men is he? what admiration have I him in? O how I love him? what is there which I would not do for him? run, ride, ſpend for him? ſuffer for him, expoſe my ſelfe to any hazard, maintaine his quarrell by any weapon? O how he commends him, in all companies, and blazeth his name farre and wide, till he have raiſed up as great fame abroad, as reputation at home. Aske him why he doth ſo, he will anſwer, That I am, I am under God, by him: I was a dead man, worſe I could not be, he hath reſtored mee to health, and I am better (I thinke) then ever I was: and therefore I muſt alway count him my preſerver.

I remember in the Roman ſtory I have read of a certaine ſpectacle upon the Circk or Theatre of Rome, where (among other ſports) condemned perſons were to fight for their lives with wild beaſts; it fell out ſo, that a man before time paſſing through the wilderneſſe met with a lyon. And looking for no other then death, fell downe for feare. But the poore Lion approached to him with much moane, and held out his foote to the man, which foot of his, by reaſon of a thorn, or ſome ſuch like thing ſticking deep therein, had ſo rankled and ſwell'd, that it was like to hazard the lyons life: The man with all his Art and skill fell to his Surgery, and ſo wrought that he pull'd out the thorne out of the Lyons foote, by the rootes. The poore beaſt feeling her aile and danger gone, fawnes upon the poore man, and makes all the love, that a dumbe creature could poſſibly, to him: leads him out of the foreſt, and there leaves him, and ſets him at liberty. It was the lot of this lyon after, to be taken, and to be ſent to Rome for a preſent, and it was the worſe lot of the man to commit a great Robbery: and being condemned to the Theatre, to fight, what lyon muſt be brought forth to fight with this man but this lyon? The man all amort, and deſpairing of life, this preſerved lyon knowes his Surgeon, & comes to him, fawnes upon him again, and by no meanes could be pull'd from the mans ſide and embraces, but to bring the man to mind of the cauſe, he puts forth his foot heal'd of the thorne. The people defeated of their expectation, turn'd their ſporting humour into admiration, asking the caytiffe, the reaſon of ſo marvellous an accident. The man publiquely opens the hiſtory, as it were wrought: whereupon cruelty being turn'd into aſtoniſhment & pity, they decreed a ſtatue to be ſet up in the Mar-

An illuſtration of the point.

2 Kings

ket place (for eternall memory of the fact) of a Lyon embracing a man; over the Lyons head, with this title, Behold a Lyon, the ſaviour of a man: over the mans head, Behold a man the Phyſitian of a Lyon. I have beene too long, but the workes of God are not to be neglected; I would but ſhew you the ſpirit of a cure, even in a dumbe creature: what then is it in a reaſonable? But what compariſon is there betweene either and the ſpirit of cure in the ſpirituall ſoule and conſcience converted? Oh! no tongue can utter it, onely we may admire it.

Proofes of the Doctrine.

1 In examples

Examples in our Saviours ſtory we have many of the ſpirit of bodily cures. How many did our Saviour cure, of whom it is ſaid, he was faine to charme them from telling it abroad? yet they could not, but ſo much the more blazed it, to make him famous. Others were no ſooner healed, but aroſe and miniſtred unto him: others could not ſo part with him, but followed him. But one of all others will beſt ſerve our turne, and that is the blind man, *Joh.* 9. who though he had but poore ſeede ſowne in him of any faith, as appeares after: yet from this ſpirit of the cure of his blindneſſe did ſtrange things: magnifyed Chriſt, call'd him a Prophet, wondred that thoſe who had their eyes ſhould not know him! when the enemies of Chriſt, like hornets, came about his eares to deface the miracle and the doer of it, yet ſtrong was the ſpirit of this cure in the man, that he could not endure their malice: though he knew their ſpite and rage, and the danger of it, as well as his parents, yet he would not ſpare them an inch: What ſaith hee? Will ye be his Diſciples? That were fitter for you, then to ſmother ſuch a miracle. From the beginning of the world to this day was it never heard of, that any opened the eies of the blind. Oh! how it affected him! Surely it might have become one of his ſtrongeſt Apoſtles thus to have defended him. But the ſpirit of a cure, and the love of ſuch is ſtronger then death, at leaſt then Excommunication. And when the Lord Jeſus met him, he added the ſpirit of a better cure, and of converſion. Theſe hints I have given you for familiar explication of the nature of that I ſpeake of. But to leave theſe, let mee come to the Doctrine it ſelfe, to ground it out of the Word, to give you a few Reaſons, and ſo come we to Uſe.

Joh. 9.

12, 13, 14, 15, 16. verſes.

2. Grounds of the Scripture.

For the firſt of theſe, read *Jerem.* 2. 2. *I remember thee, and the kindneſſe of thy youth, and of thine eſpouſals, when thou went eſt after mee in the wilderneſſe, &c.* He ſpeakes of that firſt marriage love which paſſed betweene himſelfe and his people: who tooke it kindly that God had brought them out of Egypt, bondage, and the red Sea, and made a ſong of his mercies, and were found of him (ſo many at leaſt as knew him aright:) Noting that this firſt love is as precious to God, as early fruits of the ſpring, apples, peares, plums, peaſe, or the like are to the taſte of man, as being the moſt pure and dainty of all. And that which *Zachary* in *Ch.* 12. 10. calls the ſpirit of grace, compaſſions, and mourning, is ſutable hereto: by which the grace of God uttered it ſelfe in thoſe who

Jer. 2. 2, 3, 4.

Zach. 12. 10.

were

were converted: as we ſee it fulfilled in the Church, *Act.* 2. who being convinced of their killing the Lord of Life, were prickt in heart, and filled with mourning and tenderneſſe. it is called there a powring out, becauſe of that impotencie, and unſatisfiedneſſe which was in it, that it could not tel how to expreſſe it ſelfenough to God or man: and the holy Ghoſt uſes words of the plurall number, noting how frequent their prayers were at firſt converſion, and how bitter thoſe complaints and mournings were for their ſinnes. So wee know *John*, *Revel.* 2. touches the ſame point when he checkes the Church of *Epheſus* for the looſe of her firſt love: we know how tender and ardent that love is, which couples do beare each to other when they are firſt eſpouſed together: it may be a patterne all the life after. Sometimes its ſtyled by the name of joy, as it is ſaid, *Matth.* 13. 44. That when the Merchant had found that Pearle, for joy thereof, counting himſelfe happy therein, he went and ſold all that he had, and bought that Pearle. And thoſe in *Acts* 8. rejoyced greatly having beene converted by *Philip*: as thoſe who have found an hoord of treaſure, who would not part with it againe for a world: ſo the Eunuch went away rejoycing. Sometime by the eſteeme of the meſſenger, *Ro.* 10. *How beautifull are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of peace?* As *Eliezer*, who brought *Iſaacs* tokens and bracelets, and newes of an husband, was very welcome for his meſſage ſake. Sometime it is deſcribed by the cloſe fellowſhip and cleaving of the Saints of God together, as *Act.* 2. where thoſe that beleeved, could not part with each other, but ſold their poſſeſſions, and gave the price for the maintenance of their poore brethren. Sometime it is noted by the dearneſſe of the heart to the Miniſters of God: as *Galat.* 4. 15. *For I beare you witneſſe tha you would have pull'd out your very eyes and given to mee.* And much more by that prodigall ſpirit of ſuffering for God: as *Heb.* 10. Call to remembrance the dayes of old, wherein you ſuffered willingly the ſpoyle of your goods, were made a gazing-ſtocke both by reproaches and afflictions: and chap. 11. were perſecuted and tormented, refuſing to be delivered. Many phraſes are uſed in the Prophets to deſcribe the ſtrangeneſſe of this change, as chap. 55. end. The Thiſtle ſhall become a Myrtle tree, and the Bramble ſhall become a Fig-tree, that is, things before uſeleſſe ſhould now put on a new hew, and become profitable for all uſes: yea to deſcribe the acceptableneſſe thereof to God, it is ſaid, That the wilderneſſe ſhall be as a flood, and the deſert as the garden of God, and as the face of the earth after the winter is gone, and the ſpring is come. In the Canticles there is much to this purpoſe, *The winter is paſt, the ſpring is come, the voice of the bird is heard, the trees bud, and the bloſſomes put forth*: what do all theſe phraſes of well pleaſingneſſe intimate, ſaving that ſavour which the ſoule brought home to God affords to him, and the favour which ſhee finds in his eyes? But what ſhall I need multiply over-many proofes? It is harder to conceale them, then

Revel. 2. 3.

Matt. 13 44.

Act. 8. 8. 39.

Rom. 10. 15.

Gen. 24 30.

Act. 2. 44, 45.

Galat. 4 15.

Heb. 10. 37.

Eſay 55 *n't.*

Eſay 35. 2, 3.

Eſay 41. 16.

Cant. 2. 11, 12.

to

1 Kings

to name them. Others will offer themſelves in the proceſſe of the Doctrine.

Reaſ. 1. For the manifeſting of his worke in the ſoule.

Now for Reaſons: they are plentifull, the firſt may be this: God will have it ſo for the manifeſting of his worke in the ſoules of Converts: their courſe formerly having beene ſo contrary, baſe, and odious to God and man, noyſome to themſelves, barren, and unprofitable, themſelves ſo inſenſible, ſo dead hearted, blockiſh, and ſavourleſſe of good: what can be a more ſenſible marke of mercy to them, then that the Lord hath wrought ſuch a change, ſuch affections, deſire, hunger, love, tenderneſſe, cloſeneſſe to communion, forgetting their dung-hill, their pleaſures, luſts, vanities, companies? What could be a ſweeter marke to a rude ſavage Jaylor of converſion, then to ſpring in to the Apoſtles, waſh their wounds, make them great cheere, and ſend them away from their chaines? What could more comfort the heart of poore *Lydia*, then for a coy Dame, now to hang upon the Apoſtles, and to ſay, If you have found me faithfull, abide in my houſe? So that the Lord, in part doth it for the better contenting the hearts of ſuch, who if ſome ſuch apparent change were not wrought, would be ready to vaniſh in their feares, and acknowledge no worke at all to be wrought.

Act. 16. 29.

Ibid.

Reaſ. 2. For their heartning againſt their difficulties. See *Luk.* 5. 34, 35, 37.

The ſecond Reaſon: Becauſe as in the early loves of the married, while they are together in the Bride-chamber, all is feſtivall, after-ſorrowes muſt not be mentioned, for thoſe will come alone, and too ſoone: now it is honey-moone, now all muſt ſound of joy and gladneſſe, and to talke of debts, children, charge of houſe-keeping, and croſſes, it is out of ſeaſon: ſo is it here. The Lord foreſeeing the many brunts, damps, eclipſes, and ſorrows, which his people muſt meet with, gives them this wine of his flagons, and theſe Apples and dainties to make merry with, that they might forget care, and endeare their hearts at firſt ſo deeply in himſelfe, that when troubles muſt come, the remembrance of the love of their youth, may encourage them to beare the more willingly: and when they are growne ſtronger to beare, then he conceales their firſt delights, and allots them harder conditions, ſuffers their feaſting to be turn'd to faſting, their mirth into mournings, their ſongs into ſorrow, ſuffers them to be crockt among the pots, hurried in the world, dampt with hard conditions, and files of their firſt edge, that their inward metall, and ſubſtance may grow better. Thus he fits them for both conditions.

Reaſ. 3. To make them objects of obſervation in the world.

Thirdly, he cauſes theſe expreſſions to come from them, that they may not lie hid, like *Saul* in the ſtuffe, but be objects of marke and obſervation in the eyes of others. Sometimes God puls out Wiſedome out of her corners, and clothes her with all orient and beautifull colours, that ſhe might raiſe up admirable love of her ſelfe in ſuch as behold her. And when it is thus, each man covets to have a ſhare in her. Theſe admirable operations, which God workes in his converted ones, are ſo convincing and precious, that even they who do not deſire them for themſelves,

ſelves, will yet covet them for their beauty and comelineſſe which they ſee in others. Whoſe heart was not pierced in the Gaolers houſe to ſee ſuch ſtrange affections bred in him, all of a ſudden? when the Lord comes into a family, and diſcovers his worke in ſome one or two, in tender ſorrow, in ſavory deſires after the promiſe, unwearied queſtions, Prayers, confeſſions, and the like, who doth not wiſh himſelfe in their caſe? except it be ſome errant blocke who diſcovers his brutiſhneſſe, all are raviſht to ſee ſuch early beginnings. The Lord knowes the fitteſt way to worke upon men. Sooner will a young novice by his active ſpirit of the cure, ſtir up others, then ſome ſolid and grave Diſciples, becauſe the ſpirit of the one is more ſtirring, active, and drawing than the other.

Reaſ. 4. From that irreſiſtible power of Grace in the ſoule.

Fourthly, there is in the cure of the ſoule, converted to God, ſuch an irreſiſtible power, and impotencie, eſpecially in the firſt turning home of it, that there is no choaking, quenching, or damping of it. It reſembles her originall. Seed, leaven, muſtard-ſeed, are things of an active and encreaſing nature. Leaven in a little while, will ſowre all the lump. Hence are thoſe expreſſions of the Saints, Thy Word was in mee as coales of fire in my boſome: Can a man carry them there, and not be burnt? I would have kept in thy words, (ſaith *David*) but ſuch was the nature of them that they would not be concealed: I had no reſt nor peace, till I had uttered them to Congregations. *Peter* could not hold Chriſt in his boſome, till he had uttered himſelfe to *Nathaniel*. That woman of *Samaria* had fire in her boſome when ſhe went to tell her kindred & citizens the news of Chriſts diſcourſe. The love of God workes in the breaſts of his Saints, as it firſt wrought in his owne: he having conceived it once, could not ceaſe, till it had diſcovered it ſelfe to poore ſunken *Adam*: and hee would rather chuſe to make his onely Sonne a Maſſe ſhame, then he would not expreſſe it. Even ſuch is the ſame love, having once wrought in them: it is as the new wine in the caske, which muſt have vent or elſe it will breake. It is like *Joſephs* affection to *Benjamin*, all muſt be had out from him, and he muſt utter himſelfe to him, and fall upon his neck with a kiſſe and teares. The newer any thing is, the more forcible. So is it with love. The Apoſtle hath a ſweet word to expreſſe it, *The love of Chriſt conſtraines us*, 2 *Cor.* 5. The word ſignifies, gathers us up together: as a beaſt hemmed in a Pinfold, hath an appetite after liberty: ſo the ſpirit of love finds it ſelfe ſtraitned till it breake out. And 1 *Cor.* 13. love is bountifull, and working, full of affection, hopeth all things, endureth all things, and the like.

Gen. 45. 14.

2 *Cor.* 5. 14.

1 *Cor.* 5.

Reaſ. 5. God is the God of order.

The fifth, God is the God of order, and loves ſuitableneſſe of Age and Temper; youth naturally is hot, and full of expreſſions: it is comely for young ones to be ſo: their luſts were ſo before grace, & therefore grace muſt be ſo alſo. I reſtraine not this heat to meere youth, for if God do convert elder ones, (as *Naaman*) there

2 Kings

there is a ſpirituall youth or firſt age, even in them alſo: grace at the firſt is moſt operative, be the yeares what they may be: but eſpecially when grace falls upon tender yeares, (as for the moſt part that is the ſeaſon, ere the ſoule be ſapped in lewd cuſtomes) then it quickens thoſe hot ſpirits which it meets with to ſingular expreſſions.

Reaſ. 6. For the due convincement of ſuch as after may wax luke-warme and looſe.

Laſtly, by this ſpirit, the Lord provides matter, and argument of convincement, and inward checke for time to come, if at any time his people ſhall revolt from this grace of firſt converſion. The Lord knowes our mold and faſhion juſt, *Pſal.* 103. We ſeem at our firſt ſetting forth to the journey, ſo trimme and ſo prepared, that no troubles nor difficulties ſhall daunt our reſolution: But by that time wee have travelled a while, what with the ill way, what with ill weather, bad ſucceſſe, and what with our owne weary and crazie ſpirits within, we waxe untoward and ſtagger whether we ſhould goe forward or no. The Lord knowes how many waies this firſt ſpirit of the cure, ſtagges and wanzes in us: ſometimes the abundance of iniquity cauſes the love of many to waxe cold: this degenerate formall world is ready to quench our ſpirit: the preſidents of many zealous and painfull profeſſors, who are turned drunkards, uncleane, worldlings, Epicures, and ſinfull wretches, do ſhake us. The errour of the wicked puls us from our ſtedfaſtneſſe: feare of ſome men, flattery of others, but eſpecially a curſed heart, on the one ſide giddie, preſuming, venturous; on the otherſide ſlaviſh, fearfull and diſtruſtfull, diſtempers us: ſo that although we keep from groſſe evils, yet we are far from that frame of zeale, cloſeneſſe, and watching, which we have found onely peace from. Now when it falls out thus, and that croſſes, debts, ill marriage care of children and other diſguiſements, come upon the necke of the other: then is the Lord faine to ſtep in, and take us to taske; to upbraid us, and caſt us in teeth with our firſt ſpirit of cure, our early firſt love, ſweet affections, covenants, humble feare, watchfull care, diligent paines, zealous ſpirit. What? was this done in the greene tree, and ſhall it not be done in the dry? What? ſhall firſt beginnings ſhame thee? Didſt thou begin in the ſpirit, (if yet thou didſt ſo?) and wilt thou now end in the fleſh? Oh! is there not enough in that never dying ſpirit of an immortall hope of ſalvation, to carry thee on in thy poore courſe, with equalneſſe of affection? Say the edge be a little blunted, what, is metall gone too, is the ſteele worne out of the backe? That firſt ſpirit of ſound joy in God, ſhould by this day have bred in thy belly a welſpring of water, flowing to eternall life. Oh! for ſhame ſtrengthen the weary hands, and feeble knees, and correct the crooked, that it turne not out of the way. Thus the Lord charmes a declining ſpirit, by an experiment of her owne, and brings her backe with ſorrow and ſhame, to her former temper. So much for Reaſons.

2 Pet. 3. ult.

Luk. 23. 31.

Heb. 12. 13.

Uſe 1. Now for Uſe: firſt, is the ſpirit of a true Convert thus zealous for

for God? This then teacheth us a difference of cures, and that all are not alike: for there are many (to be ſure) farre from this temper and frame of ſpirit. Not every cure hath ſuch a ſtroake in the ſoule of a man, thus to change, qualifie and act his ſpirit, to and for the Lord. And all to teach us to try our ſpirits, and to be afraid to reſt in any baſe & counterfeit cures, which afford none of this life and operation. Who doth not now a dayes, boaſt himſelfe to have gotten this through cure? If once baptized, and profeſſe the Goſpell, it is treaſon in theſe dayes to put a difference betweene men. Alas, yee poore wretches! the ſpirit within you ſhall put the difference, though others hold their peace. The baſe, degenerate, carnall ſpirit of men, now a daies boaſting of a cure and converſion, but ſtill the ſame for their temper and frame of ſpirit, or elſe in a baſe outſide of zealous performances, and ſhewes of good, without any cordiall, geniall ſpirit of ſelf-deniall, tenderneſſe, and love to holineſſe bewrayes ſufficiently whence their cures came. Tell mee I pray, was there ſuch a ſpirit of a cure in him, whom Chriſt cured at the Poole after 38. years diſeaſe, *Joh.* 5. as was in that blind man, *Joh.* 9. When the former of theſe was in healed, what news were there? he went to the Phariſees, and there jangled, but Chriſt heard no more of him: ſo that after meeting him in the Temple, he told him, Thou art now healed, but ſin no more leſt a worſe thing come unto thee: A ſad item, ſo ſoon after! Alas, what wonder! it was a cure of the left hand: a bodily cure of lame feet, not of a lame ſpirit, and thereafter came of it: no ſpirit of tenderneſſe, thankes, acknowledgement, or engagement followed. And what came of thoſe cures in the wilderneſſe which befell the Iſraelites? when the Lord had heald them of their bondage, taken away the feare of *Pharaoh* his hoaſt, and the danger of the red Sea: when hee had removed the ſad diſeaſe of famine and thirſt: ſent them quailes in plenty, dropt Manna from heaven into their bellies: and fill'd them with the Rocke which guſht out and followed them with water: when as there was a plague gone out among them, *Aaron* with his cenſer went and ſtood betweene the living and the dead, and ſtaid it: when ſcorpions were let fly among them, to ſting them to death, the Lord ſet up a brazen one upon a Pole, to looke upon, that beholding it, they might eſcape: What came of all theſe cures? Nothing, their carcaſſes fell in the wilderneſſe after all theſe: themſelves grew as baſe murmurers, rebels, and breakers of Covenant, as ever: But as for any true ſpirit of a ſound cure, I meane, any remembring of him that had healed them, alas! it was farre from them. and why I pray you? Surely, becauſe the cure was but by halfes, not a full and ſound one: it came from one Phyſitian, but not from the like purpoſe of heart: it reacht their bodies, but toucht not their ſoules.

How many are there among us, whom the Lord hath wrought cures upon? Some of us he hath cured of our poverties, and filled our

2 Kings

Inſtruction with an *item*.

Counterfeit cures very common in the world, true cures rare.

Ioh. 5. 7.
Ioh. 9. 7, 8, 9.

Exod. 12. compared with 15. &c. and with *Num.* 11. & 25.

2 Kings

our purses with money, paid our debts, and set us on foot: others have beene cured of our ill Names: healed in point of our bad yoak-fellowes: others of us have beene healed of our diseases of body, agues, consumptions, dropsies: and God hath betrusted us with second lives, like *Hezekiah*, whē as we would have given the hope of them for a straw: but to what end have all these boones befallen us? surely to make us more ranke, proud, jolly in our selves: we have had a spirit of our cures too: but it is such as the disease had beene much better then the remedy, and had beene like to have held us in more humblenesse and feare, then our cures: I may say with *Salomon*, I have seene a misery under the Sunne; a cure bestowed upon a poore sicke man to the ruine of him. Is not this a fearfull cure? *Ahaz* becausse he was worse for crosses, is thus branded, *This is King Ahaz*: what shall our brand be, who are worse for our cures? But this is not all: the prepostorousnesse of it, That all the hope of these seemed to be before their cure: O then if God would not destroy them of this disease, but let them live, what manner of ones would they prove? but when they lived, what deivlls have they proved? That good King sung, *The living, the living shall praise thee.* But these may cry, The living shall do thee more dishonour then ever. And to leave these, others have beene healed by a better hand, by the Ministry of the Spirit, they have beene healed of their ignorance, uncleanesse, profane lives, they have gotten knowledge, & reformation of some grosse evils: but what shall we say of them? Is the spirit of a cure seene upon them? Can any man say, that grace hath bred in them, tendernesse of conscience, love to the people of God, a change of heart? Alas! no such matter: Nay there are some who are not so much as rid of their grosse lusts, and yet make great shew of zeale and forwardnesse. As lately one arrested by the hand of God, with sudden feare of death, emptied himselfe of all, and confessed that hee was habited in a custome of adultery with three or foure harlots about the same time: and yet an hearer, noter, repeater of Sermons, and a kind of Professor. Cures now are all mens cases. All will be religious, and that shall be the cover of all their ranke lusts: plaisters are now applyed to all sores, let them be as festred within, as rankled, and corrupt as they will; not to speake of secret evils of wrath, frowardnesse, rage, unmercifulnesse, rebellion of heart, worldlinesse and the like: Alas! these, men have no leasure to thinke of: they seeke religion as drunkards seeke drinke, to besot and disable their consciences, from stirring and stinging of them.

Eccles. 1 3. 5.

2 *Chron.* 28. 22.

False cures have a prepostorous spirit.

Esay 38. 19.

Note.

What shall I say of such? Alas! there is no spirit of a cure to be seene in them: they want the sound cure, which a spirit of conversion hath in it. God hath two closets of plaisters and medicines, the one outward, the other secret: in the former hee keepes universall salves for all sores: in the other Medicines for an hard heart, a proud spirit, unbeleefe, subtilty, hollownesse, impenitencie

Misery of such as rest in false and halfe cures.

penitency: To the former, men flock apace: and if they can get them, they care for no more. But the heart (which God onely askes for) runnes full of all exceſſe: and ſo long as the ſtill ſtream of outward Religion poſſeſſes them with ſecurity of their eſtate, they never lay ought to their hearts, till wrath, and hell-fire flaſh in their faces, and feare ſurprizes Hypocrites: Then all turnes to horrour, and who ſhall endure everlaſting burnings? But oh yee wofull people! Might you not have beene admitted into the inner cloſet, if you had preaſed hard to it! yes verily. That paddle and adoe which you have made to ſoder and play the Hypocrites, might have beene better ſpent, and ſped better to purchaſe a ſound cure never to be repented of. Tell me, if a man that hath a dangerous ſore upon his body, content himſelfe with going to a baſe Quackſalver with a budget at his backe, and get of him a little ſalve in a clout to skinne his ſore at times, or a little water in a glaſſe to keepe it ſweet; will this prove a cure? Or if he go to a cunning Chirurgion, and he tell him, I can cure you, and make you as ſound a man as ever you were, but then you muſt be at ſome coſt, endure ſome paine, be content to be lanced, or to have your ſore ſearch'd to the quick, or to have the dead fleſh deeply corraſived, and then to be tented, and to be patient till it be quite healed: But then the ſore man ſhould ſay, Alas! here is coſt: I am loth to waite ſo long, Can you not bind it up for me the whiles, and keepe it warme, and the Ague from taking it: if you can, Ile becontent a while, and hereafter I will come againe! But, by that time, the ſore is gangreen'd, or fiſtulated, or hath taken the bone and marrow, and the Chirurgion tels him, it is incurable, his legge muſt be cut off, or it will coſt him his life. Would any man praiſe this man? Surely ſuch are many lazars cures, even ſuch as will make them creeples or bedrid ones. But ſound cures we heare of few. In the feare of God, take warning: All cures are not of one ſort: God can bee ſlight with the ſlight, and ſound with the ſound: Therefore come unto him, open thy wound, move him to pity, thou art but a dead man, if he helpe not; come, ere thy heart be quite hardned and paſt hope, confeſſe his skill, ſubmit to his cure, let him ſearch, tent, and handle thee as he will: If a ſound cure be thine aime, to get an heart truly purged of thy humours, broken, beleeving and repentant, know the Lord can cure thee wholly, as good cheape, as by halfes; renounce thy patchery and hollowneſſe, and come to plaine termes, and he can make thy fleſh come againe as a childs. But know, that till then, no ſpirit of a cure will be ſeene in thee: nothing ſave a ſhifting, ſhuffling, doubtfull, darke, and ſtaggering courſe, will be come by. Onely this ſound cure will create a ſpirit of cure in thee, to be a zealous, humble, and cloſe Chriſtian, to be for the honour of Him who hath delivered thee from death and hell, which no Phyſitian under Heaven (ſave him ſelfe) could have done for thee.

Eſay 33.13.

Uſe 2. Terrour. *Branch* 1.

Secondly, this may be terrour to all whoſe frame is contrary

2 Kings

Terrour to all such as nourish open and notorious diseases in themselves.

to this spirit of Grace and Conversion. So farre from being for God, his Glory, his Gospel and Ordinances, so farre from the spirit of thankes, zeale, and joy, for grace and pardon, that they still continue in the myre of their owne filth, and still wallow in their defilements, of covetousnesse, prophaneneſſe, uncleanneſſe, and the like wofull wayes: So contrary to the spirit of such as God hath healed, that they carry about, and upon them, the nasty and leprous skin of *Naaman*; An heathenish, brutish and ignorant mind, void of all light of truth, an uncircumcised heart, a rebellious, obstinate, and impenitent course, fraught with all sinne, possesses them. I may say, these rather have the spirit of deepe and mortall disease upon them, then the spirit of a cure: they carry that in their bosomes, which is farre more mortall then *Naamans* disease: To wit, the spirit of old *Adam*, of blindnesse, bad customes, the spirit of the earth, and their lusts: nay worse, the spirit of rebellion, malice, and untractableneſſe of heart: they will not be reproved, nor convinced; but fight against the Lord and his truth, yea some of them against their owne light: which is as contrary to the spirit of Grace as can be. Oh! the sinnes they commit, are committed with an high hand, they were never slaine by the killing letter of the Law, but are alive, jolly, and secure, their sinne weares a Crowne, the King is not higher when he weares his Crowne, then these are, when they are in their Alehouses, their games, their adulterous and ungodly practises: Their tongues are their owne (for they were never redeemed with a price) their passions, humours are violent: Their thoughts, a very through-fare for the Devill: as *Esay* saith, an habitation of Dragons and Ostriches: so furious, so false in their dealings, so intemperate, that none can live by them. Brethren, it is one thing to have sinne, another to have a spirit of sinne: A spirit of wrath, is a prevailing habitedneſſe of it: a spirit of revenge, is a restlesse spirit, never quiet, till it have wreckt it selfe upon an enemy: a spirit of uncleanneſſe, is to be given over to it: a spirit of the world, is when not onely the soule hath the world, but the world hath it: It is one thing for a man to fall into a river, and to have some water got into his body, another to lie under water, and to be drown'd in it. The Apostle *Heb.* 13. 5. tels us of a conversation in covetousnesse (or the love of silver, as the word is) which is then, when a man is in the power of that lust, when it hath got the soule into her snare, and chaines: so that the flame and bent of it, is for gaine, all the thoughts, affections, and devices of the heart, are that way, sleeping, waking, alone, or in company, in calling, or in worship of God, worky dayes or Sabbaths; all is fish comes to net with such a base heart, as is powred out after that Idoll: And (Brethren) how many still of our people are such as these? So farre from the spirit of Grace, tenderneſſe, compassions, bowels of deare affection to God, to his truth and Name; that rather the spirit of the Prince of this world rules in them, acts and carries them (as sworne slaves of hell

Psal. 12. 5. 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. *Esay* 13. 22.

A spirit of sin, what, and how fearfull it is. *Heb.* 13. 5.

2 *Cor.* 4. 4.

hell, and foes of grace) according to his owne pleaſure.

Oh brethren! theſe are the ſadde times, wherein the true ſpirit of Grace and of a converted ſoule, are rare dainties. Since the power of the Goſpel hath beene reſiſted, God hath given men over to the ſpirit of all ſenſuall prophaneneſſe: The ſpirit of royſting, ſwearing, drunkenneſſe, long lockes, and all luſt, yea ſcorning the Goſpell and all wholſome Miniſtery, is come in ſtead thereof. That promiſe of powring out the ſpirit of prophecie upon all fleſh is gone: The ſpirit of the Stewes and Alehouſe, ignorance, and every man for himſelfe, is come in: The faces of men and women are altred with their ſpirits, into the faces of Lions, Wolves, and foxes: The Goſpel ſerves either for a ſtalking-horſe of hypocrites, or a ſcare-crow of the lewd: Except God be a breaking off our whole frame, and knocking together of our old braſſe and pewter to melt us, and mould us anew, in the Furnace of affliction, I know not what to thinke of the ſpirit, that rules among us! If Heathens ſhould ſee ſome of us, it would make them loath the Goſpel, and embrace their gods, *Bacchus*, *Venus*, and the reſt more ſtrongly then ever. Enough wee have who are of the ſpirit of *Caiphas* his Hall, and thoſe that ſpited, ſcorned, and ſpit at Chriſt, crying, Crucifie him: not many whoſe ſpirits are towards him, tender to his glory, to his mercy, and grace, to his poore Church and people. Oh the ſpirit of ambition! ſelfe-love is now all in all.

Ioel 2.

What ſhould I ſay to ſuch? except they be accurſed by Gods owne mouth, that never any good ſhould ſeaze upon them, let this point, in Gods feare, ſcare them. Me thinkes thou ſhouldſt not heare of ſuch a ſpirit of Grace and tenderneſſe, as I ſpeake of, but thy ſoule ſhould tremble, and thy heart throb in thy boſome, to conſider what a contrary ſpirit of corruption and hell, thou walkeſt with? Oh! if God ſhould leave thee to this ſpirit of thine owne, to be conceited of thy ſelfe, to feare no danger, to be careleſſe what may betide thee, and to adde drunkenneſſe unto thirſt, what ſhall become of thee? what is wanting (ſave hell it ſelfe) to make up the woe of ſuch a ſoule? And yet, I tell thee, this is not farre off from thee; Read *Deut.* 29. If any man hearing the words of this booke, and the curſes thereof, ſhall yet ſay in his heart, I ſhall have peace, I ſhall fare well, I feare nothing; the wrath of God ſhall ſmoke out againſt ſuch a man, and God will not be entreated of him: for why? he is over head and eares in the ſpirit of gal & bitterneſſe, a thouſand to one if ever he recover: Therefore looke about thee in ſeaſon: As the Lord ſaid to *Eliah* in the cave, ſo ſay I to thee, Up, ariſe and goe forth, for thou haſt a great journey to goe, ere thou come at the *Horeb* of God. I wiſh thee to goe by mount *Sinai*, and bath thy baſe ſpirit throughly with thoſe terrours of God, which may gaſter thee with ſome feeling of thy condition. Sinne is got into thy ſpirit, and hath ſeated it ſelfe deeply in the entrals of thy ſoule: A great gulfe is ſet betweene thee, and the ſpirit of grace: therefore pull

Deut 29.15.

Eſpecially if conceited of its owne welfare.

1 *Kings* 19.7.

2 Kings

Acts 8.22.

*Zach.*12.10.

Acts 2.

Branch 2. Indifferency & Neutrality of ſpirit, worſe then prophaneneſſe.

*Numb.*23 25.

Luke 14 *ult.*

Such have their Religion to chuſe.

Acts 18.15.

Revel 3.19.

downe thy rebellious heart, and (as *Peter* ſaid to *Simon Magus*) try by all meanes, whether this thy ſinne may be forgiven thee. The ſpirit of grace is joyned with the ſpirit of mourning: Try whether God cannot bring thee out of one ſpirit of bitterneſſe into a contrary: for he promiſeth, that all humbled ones ſhall be in bitterneſſe, (as a thing ſteept in vineger) as he that is in bitterneſſe for the loſſe of his onely ſonne. Bitterneſſe of a prophane and preſumptuous heart, muſt be turned into the bitterneſſe of a broken and ſubdued ſpirit: Oh! that ever I ſhould exalt folly ſo highly, and diſdaine mercy; yea, kill the Lord of life, as I have done! Read *Acts* 2. where this prophecy was fulfilled, in ſuch as crucified Chriſt himſelfe, and yet, being pierced in heart for it, the Lord powred the ſpirit of grace into them, and annointed them with oyle of gladneſſe and joy, ſo that they who murthered him, had the firſt hanſell of life and pardon from him; Oh bleſſed art thou, if the like portion might befall thee, who haſt ventured as farre as they did! So much for this.

Secondly, it is terrour to all Neuters and Sceptiques, whoſe ſpirit ſeemes not ſo ranke and curſed, but yet is as deepe and dangerous, becauſe they maintaine a vile ſpirit of indifferency, and mediocrity, in ſtead of this ſpirit of grace. They ſay as *Balac* did to *Balaam, Neither bleſſe, nor curſe.* In this reſpect they are worſe then the former, becauſe they utterly abandon all ſenſe of the Goſpel, and become fulſome Atheiſts (upon point) neither hot nor cold, fiſh nor fleſh: They would ſeeme to hate open villanies: But then they much more abhorre the ſpirit of the Goſpel: Their ſpirits are flat and flaſh, whereas the ſpirit of the Goſpel is tender, zealous, and powerfull: Wofull ones, hanging betweene Heaven and Earth, caſt downe from Heaven, vomited up from the earth; Salt which hath loſt his ſavour, good for nothing no not for the dunghill! All their skill ſtands in ſelfe-concealments, forſooth their religion, and conſcience may not be known! What? can you worke wonders? can you carry coales in your boſomes and not be burnt? Doubtleſſe the not burning of your boſomes by this fire, argues that there is not one coale of the Altar fallen upon them: you are Quench-coale, no ſparkle of grace can kindle upon your cold hearth! you muſt needs be aſhamed of the Goſpel, becauſe the ſpirit of magnifying it, and of juſtifying wiſdome is not in you, but rather an aloofe, dead, and Gallio-like ſpirit is in you! Whether you ſerve Chriſt or Beliall, whether you be Popiſh or Proteſtant, who (but God) can judge? And ſurely you lie fulſome upon his ſtomach, as luke-warme water, and that which makes you happy in your own conceit, will prove you accurſed in Gods: It were better you were hot or cold, then thus wambling, and next to be vomited for ever out of the mouth of him, who never returnes to his vomit! Under pretext, that thou dareſt not truſt men, thou betrayeſt God, and the ſpirit of the Goſpel: a remedy worſe then the diſeaſe! To be as wiſe as a Serpent I diſſwade thee not: But ſhall this deſtroy that naked

naked ſimplicity and ſpirit of love to God and his truth, which where it cannot goe, will creepe, and play at ſmall game, rather then ſit out? What? becauſe we cannot expreſſe our ſelves in ſuch acts and ſervices as we would, or have done, ſhall we ſerve God with neither might, ſpirit, or courage at all? Is that command diſpenſable, and confined to this ſeaſon or to that? hath God no need of thee in dangerous times? or, becauſe thou dareſt truſt no man, wilt thou therefore truſt no God? Shall the Goſpel carry thee no further, then eaſe, and the ſerving of thine owne fleſhly turne will concurre? Wilt thou dare to doe any thing againſt the ſpirit of the Goſpel, becauſe thou haſt not elbow-roome ſufficient, to act that part as thou wouldeſt?

Matth. 10. 2 *Cor.* 10. 4.

It is juſt with God to take it quite from thee, becauſe thou walkeſt contrary to it: And to give thee over to a cloſe ſpirit of thine owne, that thou ſhouldeſt jeere and ſcorne the zealous, as *Micoll* did *David*, dancing with his Ephod, before the Arke: *Was not the King a goodly foole to day?* How many of theſe Neutrall ſpirits have growne to it? Let it gaſter us from it, and teach us to nouriſh ſuch a ſpirit in our boſomes, as the Goſpel hath wrought (if ever any ſuch were wrought) and to be farre from diſdaining it. He that cooles and checkes his own ſpirit from zeale and grace, will (in a ſhort time) be a ſecret diſcourager and checker of others. How many are there, of yeeres and diſcretion enough in other matters, who will baite their children and ſervants from their diligence in hearing, and zeale in profeſſion? How many will ſay, I my ſelfe was as hot as you, but now time and experience (they ſhould ſay, time the Mother of truth, which hath diſcovered their hollow hearts) have made me wiſer? And (I warrant you, ſay they) as hot as you ſeeme, we ſhall have a cooling card for you, and in time, when children grow on, and debts encreaſe, and an hard world beſets you, you alſo will change your zeale into wiſdome, and become as temperate ones as we, and abate your great reſolutions. How many are there, whoſe great flames are now quailed, and become as cold as aſhes? But woe be to ſuch, Satan hath entred into them againe, (though he ſeemed to be caſt out at the firſt) let none that have any dramme of this grace of the Goſpel, be damped for ſuch as theſe: For he that hath bred in them this ſpirit, either can keepe them from ſuch temptations, or elſe can make their ſpirit riſe above them, and encreaſe: whereas the end of ſuch revolters as theſe ſhall bee worſe then the beginning. So much alſo of this ſecond ſort.

2 *Sam.* 6. 20.

It commonly growes to open prophaneneſſe.

Matth. 12. 45.

Thirdly, this is terrour to all Pelagian, Popiſh, and Carnall ſpirits, which are as oppoſite to the Spirit of Grace and converſion, as light and darkneſſe. The ſpirit of a true cure, of *Jordan*, differs in all points from this ſpirit of ſelfe, and free-will: The one is for God, and his glorious grace ſets him up in the ſoule with admiration and thankes: But the other is, to ſet up and glorifie it ſelfe, and the will of the fleſh, to make God ſtoop to man, to fetch him from Heaven, to the barre of humane cenſure, there

Branch 3. Pelagian ſpirits farre from the true ſpirit of a cure.

2 Kings

to anſwer for himſelfe, why he ſhould not vouchſafe grace to this man as well as that (both being equally diſpoſed:) and if the Lord anſwer, Becauſe it is of my free love, to ſhew mercy to whom I will: they ſtrive with him, and tell him, This his pretended mercy, is meere injuſtice: and cruelty above the moſt mercileſſe Tyrants, to make a man and damne him when he hath done: to preſcribe him a rule, which he never gave him power to performe, and to require that of him, which himſelfe hath by an eternall fore-decree diſabled him from. O wofull pride! Shall potſherds contend with their Maker? If they will needs claſh, let them claſh with potſherds, and try which pot is ſtronger, but to quarrell with the Potter, how impudent and bootleſſe is it? And yet thus it is: Note it who will: The ancient ſpirit of converſion, tender love and zeale to God and his truth, never proſpered ſince this baſtard ſpirit of ſelfe and free-will came upon our ſtage: It blaſted all ſincerity, and gracious affections as ſenſibly as the Eaſt-wind blaſts the tender buddes of the Spring! What was *Naamans* ſpirit (I pray) ſo long as his *Abana* and *Pharfar* laſted? Surely oppoſite to the Prophet, to *Jordan* and the promiſe. So is it with this: Nothing will downe with the ſpirit of ſelfe, ſave to pick quarrels with free grace: it is no wonder, that they are oppoſite to men, who are ſo contrary to God himſelfe: Tell me, where will yee picke out a Pelagian ſpirit, which ever was zealous for God, tender to his glory, jealous of offending him, or carefull to pleaſe him! The like I may ſay of the ſpirit of Popiſh devotion, ſtanding in the bare letter of the Law, of duties, of outward ceremonies and performances, putting a Religion into the worke wrought, and deed done? What doth all the dunghill and droſſe of Popery ſeeke to eſtabliſh, ſave a carnall Religion? What doth it ſo much abhorre as ſelfe-deniall? (except it be in ſome externals for the meriting of Heaven:) what is ſo odious to it, as faith to juſtifie? Alas! That pleads for ſalvation by juſtice, and not by grace! It uſes Chriſt onely for a meere formall perſon to beare her name, but ſhee will beare all her charges her owne ſelfe! And under a colour of ſome glorious ceremonies and outward worſhip, what doth ſhe but muzzle the mouth of conſcience, and nuzzle the ſoule in a rotten peace, which either will carry her to hell laughing, or elſe breake out into utter horrour and deſperation! I aske but this queſtion, When as once the Lord hath truly turned the ſoule to God, what is more odious & irkſom to it, then that which overthrows the Word and Promiſe, and ſets up in ſtead of it, a Religion of mans braine and inventions, garniſht and diſht out with the ſhreds and dregges of fleſh, without a droppe of true bloud of Chriſt, or one ſparke of the ſpirit of grace! Who wonders, that whereſoever this traſh becomes, there the true preaching of the Lord Jeſus, the power of the Goſpel, the honour and eſteeme of the Miniſtery of Reconciliation is trodden in the dirt, and caſt out as unſavoury? But I ceaſe, and leave this Uſe of terrour, and come to an Uſe of reproofe.

Rom. 9. 13, 14, 15.

Eſay 45. 9.

1 *Theſ.* 2. 15.

Popiſh ſpirits likewiſe.

Eſay 4. 1, 2.

And

And that ſhall be of all ſuch, as in times paſt, have ſeemed to be the firſt head of the Profeſſors in this kind, for their ſpirit of zeale and love to the Goſpel, but have now catcht a fall, and cannot get up on their legges againe: but remaine and welter in a lukewarme and degenerate eſtate, both in the ſight of God and his Church. Brethren, the time hath beene, in ſome of our memories, that men have thought no Miniſtery zealous enough for them, but wiſh'd with *David*, *Let the righteous ſmite me, and it ſhall be as balme:* But now, theſe men are growne weary of ſuch, loath reproofe, and will teach Miniſters, what, and how farre they ſhall order their diſcourſe. Each thing ſpoken in particular, is ſpoken againſt them: They who would have given their very eyes to Gods Miniſter, and with *Naaman* here, thought neither gold nor ſilver, nor changes of rayment, good enough for him: will ſcarce give two braſſe farthings to keepe them in their places: At firſt, who but they, to get them in? and now, who but the ſame men to hunt them out? What? *Are we become your enemies for telling you the truth?* is this your great ſpirit of the Goſpel (ſhall I ſay) or of ſelfe-love? The time hath beene, when you came new minted (as you thought) out of *Jordan*, that ſuch tenderneſſe of conſcience was upon you for God, that you would ſcarce take up a pinne or a ſticke of another mans, leſt you ſhould ſinne: But now you that ſo ſtrained out a Gnat, can ſwallow a Camell: Some of you dare grind the faces of ſuch as you are to deale with, and no money is ſweeter to you, then that which you get by an hard bargaine: Once (if you be remembred) you tooke thought how you ſhould ſubſiſt from weeke to weeke, for lack of the Word: Now, you can paſſe weekes and moneths, and never come at a powerfull Sermon: and, which is worſe, whereas the leaſt offence in this or any other kind, would ſmite you like the ſting of an Adder, now, you are ſo brawned, that it never troubles you awhit! The time hath beene, wherein the ſorrowes and ſufferings of Gods ſervants went ſo neere you, that they made them deerer to you, then ever: Now no peny, no Paternoſter, as the Proverb ſaith, and let them ſinke or ſwimme, what care you! Once you could forfeit your names, your ſtates, your paines, your liberties for the truth of God, and profeſſe that it was better then ten thouſand of your lives: Now alas! the leaſt ſtirring of a Mouſe behind the painted cloth, is enough to make you tremble like an aſpen leafe! Oh! you love to ſleep in a whole skinne, and the notion of a perſecutor, an enemy, a priſon, or a fine, is hideous unto you! Rather had you to ſpend five pound to quit your ſelves of ſuch a feare, with a craſie conſcience, to pleaſe a timorous and degenerate ſpirit, then five ſhillings to hold out the Profeſſion, the Reſolution for that truth, which once was dearer then your lives.

Uſe 3. Reproofe.

Revolters from their zeale and grace of the Goſpel are in a ſadde caſe.

Pſal. 141. 5. *Gal.* 4. 15.

Heb. 10.

The dayes have bin when Novices and firſt Converts, were very ſcrupulous of their faſhions in attire, their companies, their liberties, games, and recreations, both for kind and meaſure, both for feare

Zeale of firſt converts deſcribed.

2 Kings

for feare of ſin, and alſo of ſcandall: marvellous loth to incurre the leaſt ſuſpition of a carnall ſpirit, in theſe or any kind, as jarring with the tenderneſſe of heart, which the firſt ſenſe of mercy wrought in them: Now every man fals to his diſpenſations, and ſwallowes downe all theſe, as if there were nothing, either within them to checke, or without them to ſtumble at. Once, the manner was, to enquire after the cloſeſt, ſtricteſt courſe of worſhipping and walking with God: as thinking no coſt too much for God: Now the faſhion is to aske, what is the leaſt degree of true faith, that if they can make themſelves beleeve they have that, there they may ſet downe their ſtaffe! Now the firſt queſtion is, What liberty may a godly life admit, how may we be religious with leaſt adoe, how may we ſave our ſelves beſt, and goe neere the wind, without too much note for preciſeneſſe, or trouble for our profeſſion? The fatneſſe of the Olive, and ſweetneſſe of the Vine was wont to be ſo precious with moſt of us, that wee abhorred to exalt our ſelves above the trees, with the forfeit thereof: But alas! thoſe dayes are out of date, now each Chriſtian thinkes it no bargaine, except he may jolly it out in ſome carnall manner, and live with reputation in the world, above his fellowes, and with note among them that are carnall: if they cannot brave it out with great ſhewes, fine cloaths, matches for their children, raking up heapes, that they may beſtow upon the pride of life, that which they were wont to beſtow upon God, good perſons and cauſes; it ſavours not in their noſtrils. Once they troubled them moſt, who ſuffered them not to bee godly faſt enough: now theſe are no eye-ſores, they can beare them well enough: but they trouble them moſt, who will not let them be rich faſt enough; who mourne to ſee that money, and pleaſures, and vanities, ſteale away their hearts: they could ſmite ſuch, as *Balaam* did his poore Aſſe, who thus trumpe in their way, and ſtop their pace, in that, which they cannot ſeeke faſt enough. Oh poore wretches! Went not the ſpirit of Grace out with you to ſtop you alſo? What? had you laid this ſweet babe in the Cradle to ſleepe, while you thus play your parts?

Iudg. 9.

Numb. 22. 27.

Is there (thinke you no dinne to awake this ſleepy ſpirit, no croſſe to ſting you, as fire in your fleſh, and ſo to recover your temper? Take heed then you cozen not your ſelves at laſt, as you have deceived the hope of others: for ſure, if you be, or ever were right, there muſt be a way to let out this Pleuriſie. Brethren, I can ſcarce tell to whom I ſpeake, I ſcarce beleeve mine owne eyes! If I may, are there not ſome here, who counted it a marke of their true tenderneſſe, to ſhunne the leaſt appearance of evill? But where is this become? Shew me the man, whoſe jealous heart can prove, that he hath not by nibbling at ſmaller evils, ſo imbezzeled his peace, and gull'd down the Sea-wals of his feare and conſcience, that now he is waxen hardned by the deceitfulneſſe of ſinne? What ſhall we ſay in theſe caſes? Surely, either Gods Word, and the worke of Grace admits

1 Theſ. 5.

mits a change with the time, or elſe, theſe are thoſe ſadde dayes, wherein men have gotten the ſtart of this ſpirit of Grace, and gotten more wit then our Predeceſſors have had, to wit, to joyne Religion with the liberty of our owne wils: Such diſpenſations (doubtles) the Church of God never knew: but rather, in the looſeſt times, counted it their eare-marke, to be cloſeſt Chriſtians. Thoſe who now nouriſh tenderneſſe, are made ſcornes and by-words, as fooles who know not their liberties. It was once a marke of the true ſpirit of Grace, to make conſcience of the Sabbath day, as a morall charge (although changed by the ſpeciall inſtinct of the Lord Jeſus (the Lord of the Sabbath) from the ſeventh day to the eighth:) But where ſhall we come now, where every man ſpeakes not his owne words, if not prophane, yet common, and ordinary in all mixt diſcourſes, about perſonall matters, or elſe newes and novelties? Who curbs his ſpirit, to the talke of a Sabbath, ruling his thoughts, affections, or converſe, ſo as at night he might lie downe in peace? Truly, Chriſtians ſhall not have need of enemies to bring in a forme of godlineſſe for ought I ſee; themſelves, even in their diſtaſting it outwardly, love it too well inwardly; all love a Religion of eaſe, and breadths, and owne ends. This is that Viper which threatens to eate through the bowels of Religion, and to bring it to nought. Ah! little doe we thinke, that this temper of ours doth lie heavie upon Gods ſtomach, till he ſpue us out! How juſt is it with the Lord, for ſuch a deſerting and revolt from the firſt ſpirit of our converſion and falling to the mixture of *Sardis*, *Epheſus*, and *Laodicea*, that is, a dead, a decayed, and lukewarme temper; to remove the Candleſticke our of his place, to take his flight not from the Cherubims to the threſhold, but from the Temple into a Wilderneſſe, there to gather a new body of people, (not defiled with this ſcurffe) and live among them, rather then to take theſe Coleworts of ours to feede upon, aad this refuſe remnant and ſcraps of that royall feaſt which we were wont to make him, whiles the ſavour of his grace continued among us? Large I might be in urging particulars, but by the Paw judge of the Lion, and let this ſharp reproofe, in Gods feare, warne ſo many of us, as in whom every ſparke of old ſpirit is not extinct, to looke about us, that we nouriſh this marke of Grace in us, and quench it not!

Revel. 2. 5, & 3, 18.

Ezek. 9.

1 *Theſ.* 5. 25.

And ſo I goe on to ſpeake of that Uſe of Admonition; And firſt to warn all in whoſe hearts any ſpark of this Spirit of Grace and Zeale to Gods truth hath beene bred, that they nouriſh and nurſe it in themſelves continually: That they waxe not confident in their firſt beginnings, becauſe their edge was quick at the firſt: as if they were paſt danger, or as if this grace would grow up in them, without their owne induſtry and watchfulneſſe! Alas poore ſoules! you have but ſaluted Religion with the upper lip: Tender ſpirits and keene edges may be ſoone damped and dulled: you have a great journey to goe, a world of worke to doe, a wofull

Uſe 4. Admonit. Branch. 1. Admonition to the people of God to nouriſh the ſpirit of firſt converſion in themſelves.

2 Kings

wofull heart of ſecret poyſon ſtill to ſubdue, which will not eaſily yeeld, it is not your affections which will beare you out againſt a ſad body of death, and a nature of old *Adam*: many croſſes, feares, bad examples, and errours of the wicked abide you, and early or late will ſhake your frame, and try what metall you are made of: Doe not prophecy to your ſelves a ſhot-free eaſe, and to walke without feare of bullets and darts, in this world. The Devill ſeemes to be ſad that he hath loſt you, but of all other people, he watcheth you a miſchiefe, and would bee gladdeſt, if he could pay you home: you are his objects of fury, and ſet in the forefront of his battery, if the dint light upon any, it is likeſt to ſeiſe firſt upon you: And thouſands who have given as great hope of as ſound and cloſe a ſpirit to God, and have oppoſed ſinne, baſe formall courſes as much as you, have yet revolted to Satan: and he hath laid ſeven times as many irons upon them as at firſt, to ſecure himſelfe from a ſecond eſcape: Tremble to thinke of it. Seeke to improve this firſt Grace of yours, this zeale and affection to the Goſpel, and againſt all enemies of ſincerity; with a wiſe, ſteddy, and full reſoluteneſſe of heart, to undergoe any brunts, purſuits, diſcouragements, offences by falſe Hypocrites, or other affronts which may come in the way: It is not poſſible, but this Age (affecting nothing more then a contrariety to power of good, and upright walking with God) muſt needs put you to it daily, and try you throughly with the infinite many trials which it hath deviſed to ferret out the good from themſelves, that they and their hypocriſie might predominate, and all ſoundneſſe be abandoned: Lie not therefore as two irons on both ſides the loadſtone, let not your ſoules play booty with God in this weighty buſineſſe: ſtagger not, be not now haled by the falſe flatteries of this painted harlot, or ſcared by the terrours and threats of a frowning tyrant (for the world is both) but ſeeke to be inſenſible of her: If ſhe finde that love of Gods truth wanzeth in thee, and thou coudſt beteame to be at more eaſe and elbow-roome in the world, or that thou feareſt trouble, or beginſt to ſtrew and garniſh thy falſe heart with any other luſt, ſhe hath enough, ſhe is ſure of thee.

Matth. 12. 45.

Caveats againſt a declining courſe in ſundry particulars

Rather ſet before thine eyes, the wofull end of all decliners; All that come rolling down the hill faſter then they ever got up; They ſhatter themſelves, and breake their bones, without hope of ſetting againe, their end is commonly worſe then their beginning: Loath each ſtep of a baſe heart, going this way, and allaying this ſpirit with her owne mixtures: If firſt heate chill, it will die a thouſand to one; if that which ſhould inflame all the whole courſe, be it ſelfe cold, how great is that coldneſſe? Diſcerne it in the firſt approach, whether it be by caſting on cold water, or not laying on more fuell. If the love of the world, pleaſures, merry company, a looſe heart tickle thee: of if thou grow ſcanter in meanes, as in prayer, hearing, meditation, or faſting; leſſe watchfull and timorous: ſuſpect thy ſelfe betimes. Stumble

1.

2.

not

2 Kings

Stumble not at the infirmities of the religious, but cover, and interpret them mercifully: take no occaſions of offence: nouriſh every thing, which might breed in thee a better opinion of holineſſe, and entertaine no ſuſpitions againſt it, let not her fare the worſe for the errours of them that profeſſe: no, nor for the revolts of time-ſervers. Harbor not in thy ſpirit any ſecret diſtemper of pride, ſelfe-love, ſelfe-conceit, ſullenneſſe, frowardneſſe, carnall wiſdome, earthly mindedneſſe: Theſe will creepe in and tickle as a Viper, under colour of ſome lawfulneſſe or other; but they will eate out the very bowels and heart-heate of the ſpirit of grace: Nibble at none of the Devils baits: Behold not too wiſely the errour of the wicked, and the ſtreame of evill, without feare or checke: leſt this cauſe the love of many to waxe cold. *Matth.* 24. 13. Daily ply the meanes, and lay on fewell: arme thy ſelfe by prayer againſt the courſe of decliners, as *David* did, *Pſ.* 101. 3. Nouriſh humility and ſimplicity of ſpirit (next to faith) above all: Inure thy ſelfe to deny much for God, that ſo he may grow dearer to thee, and thou to him: Spend not, nor waſte thy zeale needleſſely and raſhly upon objects of leſſer weight, but reſerve thy ſelfe, till a better warrant, and call, a ſtronger, and more weighty object to pull thee forth: leſt thou faile in the hotteſt of the attempt, as thoſe moſtly doe, whoſe zeale is unballanced. Be not wedded to thy ſelfe: for the ſpirit of grace doth not ſo well befit him, who abounds in his owne ſenſe. *Moſes* was a man who in his own matters was very meek and calm: and therfore his zeale in breaking the Tables, and indignation againſt that Idolatry, became him the better. Eſteeme and value each ſinne by the nature of it, not the cry or outſide of it. The loſſe of thy ſpirit, perhaps, ſeemes not ſo hideous to thee, as ſome open ſinne which thou ſeeſt in others, as to oppreſſe, or be drunke: but it is worſe: not onely becauſe it is the ſeed of thee, but becauſe (although thou ſhouldeſt never breake out ſo farre, yet) it is the decay of thy frame and temper of goodneſſe. A burning Ague is not ſo dangerous as a Conſumption: A great gaſh of a ſword upon a fleſhie part, arme, or thigh, carries more bloudy ſhew with it, but the drawing of a ſmall wyre through the heart, is far more mortall: the prick of a pin there, is worſe then the wound of a ſword upon the legge. To finiſh this, uſe conſtantly all ſpirituall, lively, quickning ordinances: and the more lively diſpenſed, the rather: Side with them that are ſpirituall, caſt thy lot into their lap, mourne with them, laugh with them, gaine or loſe with them, trade with them: of all duties, meanes, or graces, ofteneſt trade with the moſt ſpirituall, eſpecially faith, the life of all, both in one condition of liſe and other: ſuch meditations as thou feeleſt will leave thee moſt heavenly, and carry thee fartheſt off thy ſelf, traffique moſt withall: knowing that a carnall, lukewarme ſpirit, is alway at the doore offering it ſelfe, but a ſpirituall will not bee kept, ſave by ſtrong hand: Preferre this ſpirit of grace in thy wife, child, or friend, before the moſt beautifull, rich, or poli-

3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
Matth. 24. 13.
Pal. 101. 3.
9.
10.
11.
Compare *Num.* 23. *with Exod.* 32. 19.
12.
13.
14.
15.
16.

ticke

2 Kings 17.

ticke fellow in all the Country: love ſuch an one with all his infirmities, rather then another with the beſt accompliſhments. Alſo uſe Gods afflicting hand wiſely, for that fire is needfull oft-times to quicken inward hearts, as the fire of thy heart, to helpe the heat of thy fingers and feet: and thereby God would viſit thy ſpirit, and keep it in temper. So much for this firſt branch.

Branch. 2. *Admon.* Recover again thy temper, if it be loſt: & by what meanes.

Secondly, if by any meanes thou be ſunke and decayed in this ſpirit of Grace, never lin till thou haſt recovered it againe. Many wayes this may be: and never fals out more frequently then in theſe falſe-hearted dayes. Sometimes by overmuch piddling about the bables of this world (for every of us muſt have ſome vanity or other to while our ſelves about:) ſometimes by more ſad plodding about profit and commodity, or by multiplicity of buſineſſe, and more irons in the fire, then we can well manage, overſtocking our ſelves with cares and employments, which we cannot compaſſe: ſometime by ſadde accidents in our courſe, as ill ſucceſſe in our trades, diſtempers through unequal yoking in marriage, wrath, frowardneſſe, and diſcontent betweene couples: or, by raſh ſuretiſhip which proves a great ſnare to the ſpirit, by bad debtors, by decay in our eſtate through improvidence, and unskilfulneſſe: by falſe friends bringing us into trouble: by quarrels and ſutes in Law, eſpecially with potent adverſaries: by bad children, not anſwerable to their education and hopes: Theſe weare and teare out the ſpirit of Grace, diſguiſe a man, and weaken his zeale, care, tenderneſſe; yea, oft make him aſhamed to put forth himſelfe for God, leſt his poverty be caſt in his teeth; They intercept a mans times and ſeaſons for God, as the hearing of the Word frequently, hinder our joy, liberty, or leiſure to ſet up God in the family, or to maintaine ſecret intereſt with him, they hamper the affections from expreſſing that grace which is within. There bee other occaſions alſo within, as eaſe and ſloth, wearineſſe of a baſe heart; alſo ſome mixt of both, as want of good Miniſtery, or removall of dwellings, (which oft are a great hurry to a good mind, which is not in her power and liberty in ſuch caſes) want of good examples, or helpe of private friends, ſorting together in the wayes of God: All theſe helping a wofull world of Declenſions, the Devill, and a baſe heart, muſt needs damp and coole many: and alas! when this diſeaſe is not cured betimes, it will at laſt breake out into worſe evils, ſad revolts, breach of peace, and loſſe of conſcience, with ill report, and ſcandall: which are not eaſily cured: Therefore for ſuch, this I ſay, Doſt thou come to ſee this thine eſtate? Doſt thou perceive hereby, thy precious ſpirit to be weatherbeaten and halfe blaſted? thy fatneſſe and ſweetneſſe to be gone, thy ſelfe to become as a dry branch, and as one in whom there is no forme or beauty to be deſired, as in times paſt? Mourne for it, as for the loſſe of a jewell; Say thus, Who ſhall give me the wings of a Dove, that I may flee into the Wilderneſſe, and there with a penſive ſoule call to mind the love of my youth, which the Lord in thoſe

1.

2.

3.

Pſal. 55. 6. Ier. 2. 2.

thoſe firſt cords of his, and drawings of my heart, inſpired mee withall. Oh! how little did I then looke for ſuch a change? When I was one of the children of the bride-chamber, I was merry and joyfull: But now I had need to faſt and mourne. Then I knew not what ſorrow and ſinne meant: but went in and out with God at pleaſure. Oh! that ſome happy meſſenger from God, might bring me newes of the recovery of of my ſpirit again to that temper whereof it was wont to be! yea, if it were but newes of a way by which it might be once reſtored! Well, if thou wilt not give God over, he will not forget thee: For why? if thou be ſure that ever this ſpirit was indeed wrought in thee, by the worke of God (whoſe workes are perfect like himſelfe) then know that this ſpirit is eternall. And therefore, as I adviſe thee to tremble at thy deadneſſe, and lukewarmneſſe, ſo yet I adde, lin not, till ſome beame of ray of that old ſpirit of Grace (as the Sun through a cloud) ſhine into thy priſon wals: and cauſe thy fleſh to returne againe (through faith in his promiſe) as the fleſh of a little child. If things indifferent, or croſſes have diſguiſed thee, the worke will be the leſſe to file thee bright againe: becauſe the leproſie is but in the skinne: But if any ſpeciall and groſſe ſinne have fretted inward, and ruſted thy ſpirit, waſted thy firſt love: then let it ſmite thee, as an arrow piercing thy liver: deſire God to ſlayte and gaſter thee out of that lap and boſome, as *Sampſon* out of *Delilah's*. As they who worke in Coalepits, if once they ſee their candle to burne blew, make away, with all haſte poſſible, leſt they be choaked: So thou, whiles any life and ſpirit remains, haſt thy ſelfe out of this ſadde damp, and looke up to him to prevent utter death, who hath promiſed to eſtabliſh thee with his free ſpirit, and ſo to renue it, that it might never againe waſte or decay in thee: See that it doe not. Thou haſt felt the danger of loſing it, and the preſence of God to thy ſoule by it: If God have gathered it up againe, as water ſpilt on the ground, and girded up the loynes of thy ſoule with a ſecond girdle of renewed zeale and fervour of heart, lock thy doore upon thy beloved, clip him faſter in thine armes, then ever: and ſinne no more, leſt a worſe thing befall thee.

Simil.

Fifthly, this Uſe leads me to another and more weighty one of Examination, to try thy ſelfe about this ſpirit of Grace, whether ever it were wrought in thee ſoundly or not. There is no one thing within the whole compaſſe of Religion, more uſually counterfeited then this: neither is there any one point, in which either the deceit of the heart is more dangerous, or the ſoundneſſe of it more comfortable to the ſoule then this is. We read in ſtories, that all brave Princes have beene counterfeited by ſycophants: *Charles* the fifth, *Edward* the ſixth of *England*, and others: But although their outſides favoured them, yet their ſpirit diſcarded them at laſt: a baſe-bred fellow cannot equall the ſpirit of noble bloud. All *Judaſſes* and *Theudaſſes*, *Acts* 5. came to naught, becauſe they had baſtard ſpirits. There was once (as a *French*

Uſe 5. Examination.

Acts 5. *end*

2 Kings

A rare hiſtory of a *French* counterfeit.

rare Hiſtory hath it) a Souldier in the Campe wherein one *Martin Guerra* a rich Citizen of *Tholouſe* ſerved: who being in all points like to that *Guerra*, and getting ſo farre in with him as to know the ſecrets that had paſſed betweene him and his wife: at laſt brake from the Army to *Tholouſe*, and boldly went home to *Guerra* his wife, as his owne: and after ſome little ſuſpition, yet ſo cleared all doubts, that he accompanied her as his wife, and lived in peace: till at laſt, the true *Guerra* comming home, and claiming his wife, a ſute in Law was commenced at *Tholouſe* betweene them: and had not ſome privie markes at laſt, betweene her and the true husband, cleared the controverſie to the Court, the counterfeit had brought them to ſuch a demurre, that they knew not what to determine. And ſo may it fare here: ſuch are the apiſh imitations of impudent and unſuſpected Hypocrites, in point of zeale, devotion, affections, and abſtinencies from ſinne, that the very annointed of God ſeemes to ſtand before him: Nothing in this caſe is ſurer to determine the controverſie, then the ſpirit it ſelfe of true breed and Nativity. Hardly can the ſpirit of birth and regeneration, be long diſſembled: but one way or other earlier or later, it will be diſcovered. Therefore, let every one try himſelfe by this marke: even the ſpirit of Grace will bewray it ſelfe: Not at firſt perhaps: for *Alexander* was almoſt crowded to death in the tumult at *Epheſus*, and in *Pauls* quarrell, almoſt puld in pieces (a terrible patterne, as a worthy Writer ſpeakes:) But yet, at length, time tried him, and he grew an open revolter after, and was delivered to Satan. *Nicolas* the Deacon cheated the twelve Apoſtles: but his ſpirit betrayed him, to be a wicked uncleane wretch. *Demas*, *Hymenæus*, and *Philetus*, went farre, but their ſpirit failed them. The ſpirit of the Grape will not be counterfeited by the fruit of a Bramble: the one is generous, the other baſe. Eagles breed no Crowes, nor Doves any Kites, nor Lions Foxes: No more doth the ſpirit of Grace breed falſe Hypocrites. Well ſaid thoſe ſervants, The envious man hath ſowne Tares, for the Husbandman ſowed nothing but good Wheate. It will be an infallible marke of thy true birth, if thine owne principle be throwne out, and if the ſpirit of mercy become that in thee, and unto thee, which thine owne ſpirit once was, even a ſecond nature. Grace will caſheire and throw out thy uſurping ſpirit, that it ſhall not reigne: A falſe ſpirit workes from within to an outward, but Gods Spirit workes from without to an inward operation: That is, Grace going out of her ſelfe, and ſuſpecting her ſelfe, both for the metall, and for the ſtampe, for the kind, and for the degree, for the quality, and for the continuance, abhorring her own ſparkes and falſe blaze, ſtill ſeekes out for a new ſpirit of Heaven, a new frame of heart. But our owne ſpirit ſeekes within her ſelfe, what light, what affections, what imitations, ſhewes, and duties ſhe can finde out: never ſuſpecting her impotency to reach truth and ſoundneſſe. Now, although ſuch may goe farre with their Lamps a long time, yet at laſt, want of Oyle will make their

2 *Sam.* 16. 6.

Triall of the true ſpirit of Grace, is from it ſelfe.

Act. 19. 33. *compared with* 2 *Tim.* 4. 14. *Acts* 6. 5. 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. *Matth.* 13. 27.

As they caſt out *Ipta*. *Iudg.* 11. 2. *Note.*

their lamps flagge: when their feelings ceaſe, when the praiſes of men faile, when ſome of their actions cauſe them to be queſtioned, and when ſome right wind blowes full upon them, then they totter: when the winds and floods came, the houſe ungrounded fell. By one way or other it muſt at laſt appeare, who are men of their owne ſtockes, and who are bankrupts; not to ſay this moreover, that a wiſe man well marking the Spirit of Grace, and comparing it with the other, will by one ſigne or other, eaſily diſcerne a Noble and true bred ſpirit from violent pangs, even at the beſt. But although he ſhould not, yet the ſpirit of Grace will bewray it ſelfe in time, and diſcard the ſpirit of the fleſh.

Mat. 7. ult.

A true ſonne of faithfull *Jonathan* is a moſt precious peece to *David*, though a poore lame creeple, then all the poſterity of *Saul* beſides. One *Iſaac* is more worth then all *Ketura's* brood. The breed of a thing is all in all with men, even in theſe outward creatures, horſes, kine, and the like. So one ſoule of the right ſtamp is more precious with God then a thouſand. Be ſure that the Word of the promiſe, that immortall ſeed of God, in the blood of a covenant, bred thee to the hope of life, and the aſſurance of pardon, and this will turne all falſe principles of fleſh and blood, out of doores. Prove thy genealogie, that thou art an Hebrew of the Hebrewes, a true borne Jew, not of the letter, but of the ſpirit of Grace, and then thou haſt that marke upon thee, which will not be worne out. God lookes firſt at what thou art for thy ſpirit and breed, and then what thou doſt. Never vie upon him with thy heapes upon heapes, of worſhips, of means, of duties: but firſt approve thy ſelfe, and theſe will follow alone as the wombe that conceives truly, is free of all other conceptions: ſo the true breed of the Spirit abandons all falſe conceptions: If all other ſeed of thine owne, all principles of fleſh be caſt out, and the wombe of the ſoule cleane and cleare, this ſpirit of grace may live and come to the birth in thee. The wombe that beares a true bred ſoule, muſt be as the wombe that bare Immanuel, a Virgin wombe, wherein never any other fruit lay before. The meere, onely, and pure love of the Father, purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt, muſt onely beget thee to God, if ever thou be begotten: and no leſſe ſpirit, then that which united the Godhead of Jeſus to his fleſh, will ſerve to beget thee to him: if it would, if thy owne hopes, workes, or ſelfe could have reacht ſuch a generation, in vaine ſhould the Lord have beene at all that coſt, when he brought forth his eternall Sonne into the world, to die for it, to ſhed his blood for it, that it might become the ſeed of his Church, by the Miniſtrie of the Word. Deceive not thy ſelfe in this triall, which is very eaſie to doe, except God give thee an heart inquiſitive, willing to be reſolved, and earneſtly craving, that thou mayeſt not be deceived.

Gen. 25. 6.
Particular trials of the ſpirit of Grace.

I.

The Word of God is the immortall ſeed which bred it.

Phil. 3. 8.
Rom. 2. ult.

See *Prov. 23. 26.*

And all falſe preconceptions caſt out.

Like *Ioſephs* Tombe, never any had lyen in it before.
Luk. 23. 53.

Secondly, try thy ſpirit of Grace by the operations of it. As the principle is, ſo will the operations be: *Abiſhag* may nouriſh-

2.

By the operations of it.

2 Kings

David, while there is any naturall heat left in him: but if that faile, ſhe can put no life into him. Adorne a dead King with a Scepter and Crowne, and all his Robes. Alas! it will make a good Pageant, but all is loſt labour. Tria then what the fruits of that ſpirit are, which thou haſt: if they be ſuch as flow from an outward accidentall cauſe, violent and over-ruling, they will faile, when that cauſe ceaſeth to worke. But if thy hope, joy, and peace be from within, let outward meanes and motives either continue or ceaſe, ſtill thy operations will abide, and flow ſweetly, currantly, cheerfully from thee. Water taken off the coales ceaſeth to ſeeth: yea growes colder, then at firſt. A ſive held in the water holds it as well as a bucket: corke held downe under water will ſinke as well as lead. But if the one be taken out, and the other be left to her ſelfe, all returnes to the old courſe. So is it here. A curious Philoſopher once framed an engine of metall, in the forme of a man, and brought it to ſuch perfection, that it could jabber and patter out ſome words: but one that beheld it cryed out, Oh faire skull without braines! As in mans body, all true operations of life and ſenſe, to move, to worke, to ſleepe, eate, and the like, come from a principle of life, and ſo ſerve the ſoule; even ſo here. Operations muſt not be the principle it ſelfe, but onely belong to it: but if they be the principle it ſelfe, they are a falſe principle. He that commends a Preacher becauſe his friends love him, as *Joaſh* ſerved God, while *Jehoiada* lived, hath no love in his heart, and therefore may hate his ſervice after, as he did. He that cleaves to good company, to hearing, to profeſſion, for a vantage of his owne reputation, to get good cuſtome in trading, or a good match, or to ſerve his owne turne, or keepe ſome of his own heat, having no other Principle muſt needs turne bankrupt, for lacke of a ſtock of his owne. And the miſery of ſuch a one is, That he heares, prayes, and worſhips, that he might heare, pray, and no further, from no bottome; and ſo his operation becomes his principle. Of all ſuch wee may ſay, ſuch a principle will ſurely breed their ruine; either their eternall ruine, if no outward affronts intercept their courſe; or elſe both ruine here, and for ever, if croſſes come. For why? they do as a fóole who commits himſelfe to the ſeas, in a broken Barge. When meanes faile, when Miniſtery ceaſeth, when it becomes a reproach to profeſſe, when falſe friends draw away the heart, when ſuffring for the Goſpell comes, loſſes, trials, and troubles, approach, then all Religion vaniſhes. No hypocrite can be above Gods ſtormes and tempeſts: eſpecially if a right wind blow, it will be turn'd up by the rootes. Every wind perhaps will not ſearch each rotten tree, but ſome one or other will. The mind of the world ſearcht *Demas*: the wind of pride, and ambition, *Diotrephes*: The wind of ſecret luſts turne of ſome, the wind of affliction others: and the wind of time and continuance will ſearch deepeſt of all: for a ſtone can flye no further then the ſtrength of the hand which threw it, will carry it. Therefore be ſure, that the operations of goodneſſe

2 *Sam.* 1. 2, 3.

2 *Chron.* 24 16.

Note.

2 *Tim.* 4.

3 *Ioh.* 8.

goodneſſe which come from thee, proceed not from a falſe principle, but from the ſpirit of grace.

2 Kings

3. Try it by the frame & ſoundneſſe of it.

Thirdly, trie this ſpirit of grace by the conſtituion and frame thereof, that is, by the ſoundneſſe of it. Unſoundneſſe of ſpirit, cannot reach that which ſoundneſſe can. For why? The beſt in an unſound perſon are his Negatives: reall, poſitive, and habituall grace he cannot attaine unto. So farre as a negative way may go, an unſound heart may attaine. To ſide with religion as good, to deny himſelfe in many things for it, and to ſuffer ſomewhat, from ſome confeſſed excellencie therein deſerving it, or ſome light reſtraint, example, or ends, may be an unſound hearts condition: but poſitively and really, to lay the honour of God to heart, inwardly to love, that he commands, to grieve for the ſin of ſuch as reſiſt it, inwardly to ſympathize the furtherance of it, that is beyond him; The reaſon is, becauſe his love is not from union, but from an adherence, or hanging by, in judgement, or pangs of affection. Take two examples. It is ſaid that two ſorts ſtrove for *David* to be their Kings: the ten Tribes of Iſrael, and the two other Tribes. There was more Negative ſpirit, in the ten then in the two: Why (ſay they) ſhould not *David* be more ours, then yours? we are ten, and you are but two: wee have ten parts in him: we can conferre more honour upon him, and give him more ſubſidies then you, and many good morrows. But whence came all this? from ſhame and pride, that they ſhould be backwarder to fetch him home then the reſt; But the poſitive grace of love to *David* came from *Juda* and *Benjamin*, for why? he was bone of their bone, he was their fleſh: Nature ſtrove in them, humor in the other; their words therefore were ſtronger then the words of ten times as many tongues of counterfeits. They (no doubt) made as great a brable, but geniall love could not be diſſembled. So it was in thoſe two harlots, pleading for the child: both ſpake earneſtly, neither could put downe other, in point of words: the falſe mother was as deepe in her Negative principle as the other ſeemed to be. For why? ſhe meant to be even with the true mother, and would ſee her childleſſe, as well as her ſelfe. So the living child might be divided, ſhe cared not: But by this *Salomon* deſcryed her. The ſword being brought, then that reall heart of a true mother appeared in the one, which could not in the other, for ſhe had it not in her. A wretch could be content to leave off all Religion, if he were ſure, that none would take it up after him: for he is good, becauſe it ſhall not be ſaid, but he will be as forward as any: But if none would be good, he could be willing to be naught: Why? for lacke of that habit and ſavour of grace, which makes the ſound heart deſire and reſolve to be be good, whether any other in the world be ſo beſides himſelfe, or not: The life of the child was ſo deare to the true mother, that (although it went againſt the edge) yet ſhe choſe rather the falſe mother ſhould have it, then it ſhould be ſlaine: And therefore it was adjudged to her as her owne. So

2 *Sam.* 19. 43.

1 *King.* 3. 26.

2 Kings

is it here. A true heart would coſe any loſſe, rather deny it ſelfe to the death, then the life of religion ſhould be indangered, becauſe it is bred in her boſome. So then you ſee (brethren) Poſitives comming from life cannot be aſſembled by the heart which is dead and unſound. An hypocrite for his humour would have the the child religion into his poſſeſſion, for his credit, not for love of the life of it (for he will ſtarve and kill it, for lacke of good keeping,) only the true mother that bare it, and knowes the price of it, will nurſe and nouriſh it with her breaſts. Try thy ſelfe by this: Any Ape will imitate ſomewhat in a man: but he can neither laugh nor ſpeake for lack of Reaſon.

4. By the object, the order, and equality thereof.

Fourthly, trie this ſpirit of Grace by the object; Grace ſtrikes at the root; falſhood at the branches onely: The zeale, love, and grace of the ſpirit is chiefly, and mainly againſt the chiefe corruption of the heart, then of life: and it is firſt earneſt for the maine, moſt weighty matters of God, and then for ſecond things. Not firſt for the latter, and then for the former. Againe, it is orderly, equall, not prepoſterous and diſproportioned. Great are the cries of many Separators from our Communion, againſt corruptions, abuſes in our Church: But you ſhall ſcarce marke any order in their ſpirits. They beg n not at home, are not zealous againſt the abuſes of their owne ſoules, ſee not the pride, and deſperate ſelfe-love of their owne hearts. The glory of God in their owne Reformation they will not looke at, but ſuffer themſelves to ſwarme with all baſe evils: ſee no want of Charity, Mercy, Compaſſion, Diſcretion in themſelves. If they would ſee their owne beames, they might the better diſcover others. But alas! if there were no Church abuſes to ſpeake of, their occupation would ceaſe. And why ſpeake they of theſe abuſes? Not (as becomes them) in patience, and innocencie, to wait for a bleſſed redreſſe, but to overthrow the Church quite, and pull downe the very frame and foundations of it, yea to raze it to the ground: which never did any (of thoſe who are ten times more judicious then the beſt of them) attempt or intend. And ſo they bring an aſperſion upon others, to be as giddy and raſh as themſelves, who yet as much abhorre it, as they do thoſe abuſes. If the Spirit of Grace, of a ſound, humble, and tender heart, cleaving to the Word, cloſe to the Ordinances, could be found in them: If Chriſt and the worke of Faith and Regeneration, were as great objects in their eye, as outward adminiſtrations of the Church, we might hope better of their perſons, then now we can. So I might inſtance in other particulars. Many men have zeale & affections in them, but how do they improve them? Surely not upon the reall things of the Goſpell, but upon perſonall objects: cenſuring ſuch as equal not themſelves, in their ſuppoſed grace, judging men for their ignorance, infirmities, errors. Whereas the ſpirit of Grace looks inward: it is mercifull, long-ſuffering, meeke, loving, hopeth all things, endureth all things: it judgeth her ſelfe in ſecret, and leaves others to ſtand or fall to their owne Maſter. So likewiſe

Separatiſts frō our Church, how blind in the diſcovery of their owne corruptions.

1 Cor. 13.

wiſe the Spirit of Grace is free (as the Apoſtle ſaith) from all partiality, and hypocriſie. A falſe ſpirit cleaves to this Miniſter, or to that, for ſome by-reſpects, *Cephas, Apollo, Paul*, ſhall goe for his money: and accordingly is carried in ſuch affection, ſometimes above the clouds, ſometimes lower then the earth, in likes and diſlikes. But a ſound ſpirit loves all the faithfull Miniſters of Chriſt, with ſutable tenderneſſe of heart, (though the meaſure be, as the peculiar relation ſtands) and holds the ſame affection conſtantly to all, for Chriſts ſake: The badge of their Maſter procures honour to them in his heart, whether old, young, neere, farre off, the gifts and graces of God (though lying diverſly) are the object of his love. Not only will a faithfull Miniſter be for God in Pulpit, but out of it alſo: not zealous in publique, and in private as another common perſon. A good heart will not affect a ſtrict cloſeneſſe upon the Sabbath, and then upon other dayes looſe or careleſſe in the duties of the ſecond Table: uſing all ſorts of companies, taking all liberties, breaking promiſes, paying no debts, running up and downe with neglect of calling and family: this is no ſpirit of grace, but of corruption, guilded over with ſome file of zeale, without ſubſtance.

Rom. 1. 24. *Iam.* 3. 17 1 *Cor.* 3. 22.

Fifthly, the carriage of the ſpirit of Grace, diſcernes it from the ſpirit of unſoundneſſe: For you ſhall commonly find, that although a falſe heart will be as earneſt, zealous, and forward, as an honeſt: yet one fly or other of ſelfe reflection will bewray, whence it comes, even from pride and ſeeking it ſelfe. It cannot beteame and afford the Lord the cleere and entire honour of the action, except in the dreſſing it licke her owne fingers. As a rat behind the painted cloth, ſo doth falſhood diſcover it ſelfe herein. It is as oyle in the hand, which cannot be held in. If it be in a Preacher, you ſhall find it thus, Truly you muſt pardon mee, I was put to it upon a ſudden, but I truſt to your patience: & why? Oh! to draw on praiſe and admiration! Oh ſaith another, I could not ſatisfie my ſelf in what I did! Another will aske, How did you taſte my doctrine to day? even as feaſt-makers cannot bid their friends welcome, be merry, but there muſt be a tang of folly, You muſt pardon us for our poore cheere, when yet they know they abound: ſo here. Others cannot bring forth a point, but it muſt be with a preface, I am to ſpeake to you of a ſpeciall point, and I doubt it will ſearch the moſt of us to the quicke, a point that few of you have heard till now: and many there are ſo full of themſelves, that if they heare any man of worth praiſed for his worth, they are upon thornes till they can ſet another copie of their own by the other to blemiſh it. I was the firſt man (ſaith one) that firſt brought the Goſpell into the town; I was the man who hunted out ſuch a drunkard, and brought ſuch an Adulterer to ſhame: I do ſuch and ſuch good to the Miniſtery, to the poore, and the like! I have ſuch reſpect in my place, do ſo and ſo in my family, and the like! Here's eagerneſſe, and zeale, but moſt unſavory ſtuffe mixt with it, too ranke for an humble heart to ſmell of.

5. The carriage of it.

Sundry miſcarriages of an unſound heart diſcovered.

Let

2 Kings

Let thy hints and overtures be for God, abhorre thine owne mixtures: nothing ſo oppoſes the true ſpirit of grace, as the ſpirit of a Phariſee, Lord I thanke thee, I am not thus and thus, I do ſo and ſo: nothing more conſonant to it, as the ſpirit of that Publican, I abhorre my ſelfe, as the ſpirit of thoſe that know not what they did, Lord, when ſaw we thee in priſon, or naked, and viſited or clothed thee? This loadſtone of ſelfe will become a loadſtone for God, if thine heart be ſound. And to conclude, even ſo will the carriage of a true ſpirit, be wiſe, conſiderate, and well ballanced: ſuch an one will eſtabliſh his thoughts with counſell: Better is hee that is patient in ſpirit, then the haſty. A coole ſpirit, is an excellent ſpirit, if it be but coole in the carriage, it may be fervent in the ſubſtance. Whereas the unſound ſpirit is fiery, quick, raſh, and utters more with a breath, then it can undoe with ten: and ſo brings it ſelfe upon its owne knees to cry, *Peccavi*, when perhaps it is with reproach to himſelfe and religion. I will not condemne all for unſound, who are raſh: But I wiſh all ſound ſpirits to beware how they trench upon ſuch ſuſpitious markes: Bring not ſorrow upon your ſelves by this raſhneſſe, you ſhall meet with trouble enough in your beſt diſcretion: but that which raſhneſſe procures, ſeldome brings peace, either in ſuffering, or in the iſſue. Thus much for a taſte of thoſe markes of tryall, which may help us to deſcry our owne ſpirit from Gods grace. Many more might have beene added, but I haſten to an end.

Luk. 18. 10, 11, 12.

Mat. 25.

Prov. 24. 3.

Eccleſ. 7. 8.

Uſe 6. Exhort. Branch 1.

To conclude then, let this be an uſe of Exhortation, and that ſundry wayes. First, to all that have this ſpirit in them, to mourn bitterly for the loſſe and decay of this ſpirit throughout the Chriſtian world. Alas, how farre are we ſunke from that zeale of God againſt Popery, and hereſie, which was wont to abound! Looke into *Germany* where this ſpirit began by *Luthers* meanes, where is ſo much as a ſparke of it to be ſeene? Even in the daies of *Luther*, what horrible oppoſition was made to this ſpirit of the Goſpell? By how many meanes did the devill then ſtop the proceedings of Reformation? What wayes were not uſed by Politicians to quaſh that zeale by their interims, and ſundry bookes of Reconciliation with Popery, in their moſt Tenets? Since which times even to the age we live in, both in *Germany*, and the *Low-countries*, the Reformed Churches in *France*, and among our ſelves, how hath Satan laboured to quaile the ſpirits of men from zeale of the Goſpell? By what meanes hath Popery ſo much encroached upon us? how hardly is the name of it odious, even at this day, in moſt places? And if perhaps it be here and there ſo, yet as for the zeale of peoples to the Goſpell, from the experience of that grace of converſion, and the worke of faith, how rare is it to find? Oh! that our heads were welſprings (brethren) and our hearts fountaines of teares, to mourn for the deſolation of this Spirit of Grace among us! As he ſaid, Scarce there is mention of *Rome* in *Rome*, the change is ſo great in the places, where the Goſpell hath beene moſt famous: It is recorded

Declining of the temper of zeale and power ought to be bewailed ſadly.

corded of thoſe Jewes of the returned captivity, that many who had ſeene the firſt Temple mourn'd to ſee the latter: Some Jewiſh writers render the reaſon, becauſe not onely the frame of it was ſo poore in compariſon of the former: but becauſe of the radicall defects it had in it. It ſeem'd *Ichabod*, the glory was gone; The Holy of Holies was empty of the Arke of Gods preſence, and the Mercy Seat upon it, no more going into it with blood to fetch atonement, no more fire from heaven to kindle ſacrifices; they were faine to kindle it from the Sun-beames with a glaſſe: and as for the Prieſthood, the Jewes uſed to call it, a Prieſthood of clouts or garments, becauſe only thoſe were left the Prieſt to weare; the *Urim* and *Thummim*, thoſe holy ſhoulder pieces, & thoſe precious ſtones of the Ephod and Breſt-plate were gone. Truly (brethren) beleeve me, as *Elijah* in his Cave once mourned for the miſery of his time, ſo might we for the loſſe of this ſpirit of the Goſpell among us. What, do I deny, but through mercy and the government of our Princes, both living and of famous memory, we have enjoyed the truth of God? Or that God hath had, and ſtill hath abundance of worthy, learned, & famous inſtruments of ſervice, both in Miniſtery, Magiſtracy, & Commonalty? No, God forbid; and I doubt not but in many places, Truth and light are much improved: (although it were to be deſired, it were ſcattered more generally:) but the miſery is, that there lackes a ſutable ſpirit of love, tendernes, cloſenes, affection and ſoundneſſe to the Goſpell. The body of knowledge in many is ſo vaſt, and unweildy, for lacke of equall power, integrity and life to quicken it, that it is like to totter by her owne weight. That former effectualneſſe in Preaching, convincing, converting, waxes ſtraitned, ſcant, and collapſed. That ſpirit of ſiding with the Truth of God, defending it againſt errours, and lukewarmeneſſe, that ingenuity and cordiall ſimplicity in us that profeſſe, ſeemes to be quite gone. Traſh and droſſe of mens profits, pleaſures, eaſe, forme of religion, and ſuch other ſcurfe, as is not to be named, hath eaten up all, as one ſaid, The uſury of the New hath eaten up the gaine of our Old Univerſity. So may we ſay, The ſpirit of our new hath eaten up the power of our old dayes, in point of edge, affection, earneſtneſſe, and zeale. All is growne to diſcourſe, contemplation, and empty ſhadowes of ſincerity. Not to ſpeake of many, who formerly have ſtood for diligent preaching, and for the power of it, and are now gone aſide, and ſlinke their neckes out of the Collar. Alas! brethren, it is not your going into new *England*, which will deliver you from the ſpirit of your old death and ſloth, except the Spirit of Grace conduct you thither. All cannot goe, what ſhall become of ſuch as muſt ſtay, except God revive us at home?

2 King

Ezra 3. 12.

1 Sam. 4. 21.

1 King. 19. 10.

Secondly, it ſhould provoke us to pray to God, the great Phyſitian of this Epidemicall diſeaſe, to heale this decaying temper, and this conſumption of our vitall ſpirits, that heat and moyſture, life and vigour of grace, which threatens utter conſumption

2. *Branch of exhortation.*

2 Kings

Prayer for healing of our times of this numbe palſie of ſpirit, neceſſary.

ſumption in us? How much better were it for us to fall into a burning ague, then into ſuch a dead palſey as this: yea to runne into ſome morall evills (which yet were damnable) then thus to play the hangbies upon Religion, and to eate out the very heart and entralls of her, by our wofull unſavorineſſe and declenſion? Oh that God would heale our back-ſlidings: cancell our Bill of devorce, and make new love to us, as in old times! As thoſe Martyrs, ſo pray we, Once againe, Lord, the power and life of thy Goſpell, give unto us, the skinne and bones of an empty profeſſion, to be fill'd up and beautified with fleſh, and colour, with countenance and ſavour of grace. Oh Lord, thou who madeſt the ſpirit of man, breath a ſecond ſpirit of thy Word to inſpire our dead Carcaſſes, with a ſecond and better life: Thou who cauſedſt that Sunne of the Heavens to go backe ten degrees, cauſe this Sunne of Grace to goe forward tenne degrees, for it is gone backward too many already. Thou, who by that happie wind of thine, ſcattered upon the ſurface of the earth, didſt hazle and drie up the forlorne dregges and ſlime of *Noahs* deluge, cauſe a new face of zeale and grace to appeare upon our age, drunken and ſoaked in eaſe and ſenſuality: Lord help us to caſt our Eagles bill, pluck off our Snake skin, and renue us as the fleſh of *Naaman* after *Jordan*. Oh command an heart & ſpirit, of firſt love, courage, thanks, joy, and eſteem of thy pretious Truth and Chriſt, to return into us, let it be as new blood in our veines, and marrow to our bones; count thoſe daies of our decay, declinings, death & diſtemper, as if they had never bin: Impute not unto us our unfruitfull Miniſtry, unprofitable hearings, returning to our vomit, lingring after Popery and her defilements, contempt and diſdaine of powerfull ordinances, which have deſerved that we ſhould be ſtript and waſted of all meanes, and left to utter woe and ruine: Come and bring healing in thy wings at laſt, and pardon the ſins of all ſorts, that might haſten further wrath: for what can be ſuch a marke and ſymptome of miſery comming, & ſpuing out of thy mouth, as this decay of our temper? So many of us as cleave to God, let us not give him over for this mercy: for ſurely, many of us here, eſpecially of the richer ſort, whoſe gaines come in merrily, and live at eaſe in Sion, do ſhrewdly leane to this diſeaſe of luke-warmeneſſe: begge it I ſay of the Lord, that he leave us not quite here in this corner, and make us not an hiſſing to all our neighbours, for our barrenneſſe and deſolation of the meanes, who have hitherto abounded and cauſed the borders of our Towne to be wetted with thoſe ſtreames, which have overflowed among us. So much for this.

Esay 38.

Gen. 8. 13.

Pſal. 103. 5.

Malach. 4. 2.

Revel. 3. 18.

Amos 6. 1.

Branch 3. *Exhort.*

Gen. 18. 32. Exhortation to get the ſpirit of true converſion.

Thirdly, ſo many of us as hitherto have lurked in our dens of eaſe and unprofitableneſſe, looke up at laſt, and endeavour after this ſpirit of *Naamans* clenſing and cure. Alas! perhaps we laugh (as *Sara* did when ſhe heard ſhe could give ſuck) to heare of this, that ſuch dead blockes and lowring louts as many of us have beene to this day, ſurviving our owne hopes, and outbidding all

threats

threats and feares of the Word, by a carnall ſtupor of our owne, ſavouring nothing ſave our luſts and humours: I ſay, we thinke it impoſſible that ever wee ſhould become any other. Should ſuch as wee ever be healed of our ignorance, hard hearts, and ſenſeleſneſſe? Should we ever come to be quickned by the hope of the Goſpell to be forgiven and ſaved? Should we ever become ſavory, humble, tender and zealous ones? Truly I muſt tell you, conſidering how ſome of us in this place have ſnorted out ſeven times ſeven yeares of Sermons (or well nigh) and fatted our ſelves under the Goſpell with nothing, but ſottiſhneſſe and ſecurity: me thinkes I am halfe afraid of it. Now am I leaving of you, but how many ſhall I leave as I found them, if not farre worſe, and what is like to be their end, if they ſhould live under no meanes, or unfruitfull, who knowes? if a good day have not mended them, muſt not a bad needs paire them? The Lord ſlaite many of you this day out of your holes and corners: me thinkes I behold your face with horrour and feare of any good: but ſeeing the long ſufferings of God are bottomleſſe, and his love as farre above our thoughts, as the heavens above earth, therefore I leave Gods ſecrets unto himſelfe, and ſpread before you ſtill (even at this laſt farewell) the cords of the Lord, and beſeech you to come in, and be converted, and get this ſpirit of grace into you ere you goe hence, and be ſeene no more. Oh it would make the Angels rejoyce, and the world to wonder, as *Paul* ſaith, *Gal.* 1. Thoſe that having knowne mee a perſecutor, heard that I was become a Preacher of the Goſpell, they magnified God for mee: ſo ſhould praiſes be offered up by many for you, if it ſhould be thus. Who can tell brethren, long hath the Goſpell been laid in three pecks of meale in ſome of you, if now it might at laſt breake out as leaven, and ſeaſon you throughout, what a bleſſed parting ſhould it be to you and mee? As you are, I grant, (moſt of you) no other is to be looked for, then hath beene; earth at firſt, earth ſtill, and earth hereafter. But if earth, earth, earth will heare the Word of the Lord, it ſhall be otherwiſe: *Naaman* was as far off as you, till hee waſhed in *Jordan*: but afterward what a ſpirit of healing and converſion came he forth withall? How doth he come backe to *Eliſha*? Who can ſtay him? How is his lowring heart enlarged to the Prophet? What is too deare for him? hee loves the ground hee ſtands upon, and would carry it away upon mules, his heart is raviſht with God and his worſhip, and much water cannot quench love. Such might you bee, if the Lord would ſend *Eliſha* to you. *Eliſha* is gone, and the comming and going, death and departure of many, both *Elija's* and *Eliſhaes* you have ſeene, and now of mee a poore Miniſter of Chriſt: What ſhall no fruit come of all? I am now going to tell my Maſter, what fruit of all theſe ſixe yeares worke here, and many more in other places, and by other my Predeceſſours hath beene reaped: What? ſhall I be able to ſay nothing to comfort the heart of God and his people?

Eſay 55. 8.

Pſal. 39. 3. *Gal.* 1. *alt.*

Mat. 13. 33.

2 Kings

people? Oh ſad thing! Well, I leave it to your thoughts, it is as much as I can ſay, That if God perſwade you, nothing was done upon *Naaman*, but might be done upon you! Many of your own number, out of the ſtools wherin you ſit, ſome of your wives in your boſomes, children and ſervants under your roofes, have taſted the like, and what hindreth but you may? Oh chuſe rather to follow my counſell, then to cauſe the wrath of God to ſmoak out againſt you, for adding drunkenneſſe to thirſt, and ſpeaking peace to your ſelves, and ſaying, Though I ſtil walk on in the ſtubbornneſſe of my heart, yet I ſhall doe well enough! God keeps this plague farre from you. And ſo much for this.

Deut. 29. 15.

Branch 4. Exhortations

And ſuch as have to nouriſh it in themſelves

Laſtly, (and ſo I ſhut up all) you that have long feared the Lord, and ſhewed forth the fruit of this ſpirit of Converſion, go forward, and perſevere. I muſt not deny God the honour of his truth, he hath not left us without witneſſe in this particular. Few are they, whom this doctrine is verified in: yet ſome there are, and the very ſight of their faces this day, doth not a little encourage me to ſpeake unto them. If ever then you ſaw cauſe at your firſt comming out of *Jordan*, to joyne with God, his Religion, his glory, now eſpecially joyne partners, and cleave to him: now ſide with him, and the power of Chriſtianity. Surely he that hath hitherto kept you alive, and brought you ſafely through ſo many waters, deſerves it much more at your hands now, being much neerer to your ſalvation, then when you firſt beleeved. Doe as thoſe two Eunuches of *Jezabel*, when *Jehu* cried out, *Who is on my ſide, Who?* They looked out at the window, and became agents for him. Could they thruſt her downe headlong, who were of her bed-chamber? how much more you, who have long ſince beene ſworne confederates to the Lord Jeſus? Never was there better ſeaſon for you (if there be but a ſparke of this ſpirit in you) to declare your ſelves, on whoſe ſide you are: The power of godlineſſe is on every ſide deſerted, and ſhe throwne to the ground, if God mercifully did not by the power of the ſword, and civill Magiſtrate preſerve us, what ſhould we be, ſave a booty to Papiſts, and enemies, who have long watcht our overthrow? Now therefore, if you halt with God, halt for ever. If God bee not God, give him over: If he be that God who hath forgiven you, and will ſave you, let *Baal* be *Baal*, and let him be as he deſerveth: Say thus, Have I but one poore life to give for him, who gave ten thouſand times a more precious one for me, and ſhall I thinke it too deare for him? Shall *Rimmon* be more deare to me? Shall I goe and bow to that Idoll, having received a better cure from the God of *Iſrael*, then he could have given me? No Lord, There thou wanneſt my heart to thy ſelfe for ever; That ſweete welcome, thoſe embraces which then I felt, thoſe Flagons and Apples can never be forgotten: I behold the workes of ſuch as decline, but I bleſſe thee, I repent not of my choyce, their Image is deſpiſed by me; My ſoule come not into their counſels. Oh! if you can ſay thus, bleſſe God, who hath kept you! And for

Rom. 13. 11. 1 *King* 9. 33.

1 *King.* 18. 21.

Cantic. 2. 5. *Pſal.* 73. 19.

time

time to come, I exhort you, that the more you ſhall ſee the power of truth ſcorned and forſaken in the world, the cloſer you cleave to it, and if this be to be vile, be yet more vile! Pick out ſome ſpeciall ſervices, in which you may be uſefull to God and his glory! If the Devill take any Apprentiſes, he will ſet his marke upon them, both in their hands and foreheads: either they muſt ſhew ſome ſingular zeale for him, or elſe hee will ſuſpect them! And are you aſhamed of your Maſter? Now this world deſtroyes the Law, write it you, upon your frontlets, and the fringes of your garments; ſhew the world what Maſter you ſerve, and be not aſhamed. Let the ſame ſpirit reſt in your boſomes, for Grace which you ſee now a dayes reſts upon them, who are going from us into *New-England*. They will not endure you to ſpeak one word amiſſe of it, but their hearts are at their mouthes preſently: they magnifie and extoll it in all places, whereſoever they become: their very ſpirits are poſſeſſed and taken up with the hope and longing for it, they ſtand upon thornes, till they be there where their treaſure is, they are ſoone knockt off from hence, though their native ſoyle, where they have had all their converſation, yet as if they had not knowne it, ſo doe they renounce it, and all the contents of it: They uſe it as if they uſed it not, for the affection ſake, they beare the other: Parents, neighbours, kindred, yea, wives and children, are deſerted for it, and who may controll them? Tell them of the ſad attempt of going, what danger by Sea, what change of fare there, and want of all commodities. Oh! you doe but encourage them by your diſſwaſives, they are content to learne to deny themſelves, and to change their dainty diet, for bare, their ſoft beds for hard, and what not? ſo they may come thither. Paines, coſt, ſelling all, and packing up their fardels is nothing to them, for their deſire ſake. Oftentimes I have wiſh'd the place good enough for ſuch affections: But in this argument, touching the ſpirit of Converſion and Grace, for the embracing of which, no affections can be ſufficient, how doe we flagge? Where is the man who can doe thus much for God and his glory, from the experience of mercy? Aske thine owne heart; Doe I loath the leaſt appearance of evill? doe I carry about me the zeale of Gods owne houſe? am I tender of the leaſt offence? can I not endure the leaſt affront to his perſon, Lawes, Goſpel, Ordinances? doe I honour his Miniſters? doe I thinke nothing too deare for him, is my life, liberty, name, wife, children, vile unto me, in reſpect of a good conſcience? Oh! that it were ſo! How happy ſhould we be in approving our ſelves.

2 *Sam.*6.22.

*Matth.*7.*end.*

*Deut.*6.8.

Let me leave generals, and come to particular eſtates and conditions: yee Miniſters of God, pick out ſpeciall ſervice for God, a few of you are left to wreſtle for God, ply your worke, let not the glory of the Goſpell fall, labour to inſpire the ſoules of your hearers with Chriſt; alas! they cannot chuſe but be dead hearted, when there is no glad tydings brought them, no love ſhed into their ſoules. Yee people, looke up your old evidences

Particular urging of this exhortation to al ſorts, Miniſters people, Magiſtrates, &c.

2 Kings

for Heaven, & ſcoure off your ruſt, you ſee upon what coſtly terms the Goſpel is maintained; this is no ſeaſon to palter out your time, ſhew forth your courage for God, let not the ſpirit of Popery nor prophaneneſſe quaſh that ſpirit of Grace which is within your boſomes: Walke humbly, wiſely, and yet boldly, hold out the truth of God without feare, againſt all ſcorners and Edomites, God ſhall prop you up, feare not, the vileſt wretch ſhall never bee able to reſiſt that ſpirit, by which you ſpeake and walke. It is not your duties, hearing Sermons which will ſerve turne, except you get into the way of God, and get your ſpirits whetted up to a liveſly temper of godlineſſe, you ſhall but adde heapes to heapes, and die of thirſt: Rake up the aſhes of your firſt ſacrifice, and ſee if there be any one ſparkle alive, to kindle that old fire in your hearts God hath now farre more need of it, then he had then: If you cannot find old ſparks, goe to Heaven for new, for a double portion of it, elſe you will hardly hold out in theſe cold times. You young Novices here among us, who in your youth have begunne well, and honoured the labours of Gods ſervants by your zeale, by your anſwering to Catechiſm, & by drawing on many to God, be not diſcouraged, that the ſame Grace which made you young Sts. can make you old ones, I doubt it not, but bleſſe God for the hope I conceive of your growth and fruit: though we are as ſignes (both we and the children which God hath given us) and wonders to the world, feare not, greater is he that is in us, then with them. You Magiſtrates hereabouts, you Headborowes and Officers at home, doe not play the cowards in the cauſe of God, and the government of the Towne: ſuffer not drunkards to fill up your Alehouſes here, upon the day of our Lecture, and to rout in all curſed behaviour, all the day after, going together by the eares, ſwearing and ſwaggering: let not your Taverns and places of reſort be more frequented then Gods houſe: I ſee ruine before mine eyes, and the young fry will prove worſe then their Predeceſſors: your glory is gone, except you hold together, and prevent ſinne from flowing downe your ſtreets, and overthrowing all. And in a word, to all ſorts I ſpeake, ſcatter the ſavour of this ſpirit of Grace all about the places where you dwell: ſhine eſpecially within your owne ſphere, and families: lay in for grace and mercy, for your husbands, wives, children, kinsfolke, and neighbours, who have long beene ignorant, profane (or formall worſhippers at the beſt) pluck them out of the fire by violence; Perhaps ſome ſeed lies under a clod, they are not ſo deeply ſunk under the ſlavery of thoſe Idols, but that God may fetch out ſomewhat of them at the laſt: and ſhall it die for lacke of ſtirring up? Be earneſt with God, and ſtrive hard for the whole corner, this poore Countrey, in which ancient zeale and the ſpirit of Grace, decayes exceedingly: Eaſie ſerving of God for faſhion, and this love of the creature hath eaten up all. The laſt yeare we were almoſt ſtarven for bodily bread; but God be thanked, better food did helpe well, both to content the poorer ſort, and to uphold

Iudg. 15.16.18.

Eſay 8.18. 1 *Iohn* 4.4.

2 *Cor.* 2.14.

Iude ult.

hold their ſpirits with patience; yea, and to perſwade the richer ſort to mercy and compaſſion. Now we feare a worſe famine, if not want of the Word, yet, that the Lord (for our wretched unfruitfulneſſe) may fill our mouthes with Quailes, and ſuffer them to come out againe at our noſtrils; may fat us with meanes, and curſe us with leanneſſe in our ſoules. Lord ſuffer not the child to die at the breaſts for lack of milke: nor having it, to ſurfet! Oh thou who haſt bred us by thy Word, with the lively ſpirit of Grace, preſerve us by the ſame nouriſhment, whereby wee are begotten. *Numb.* 11.20. *Pſal.* 106.15.

Branch 5. Conſolation to all ſuch as walke in the comfort of the ſpirit of converſion.

And ſo, for ſuch among us (brethren) as have continued conſtantly in this zeale of the Goſpel, I doe here reach out comfort unto them, and ſay to them, as *Eliſha* to *Naaman*, *Goe in peace*. Though you and I ſhould never heare the voyce, nor ſee the face of other, yet we ſhall do well, as long as the peace of God is with us: Nouriſh your hearts ſtill, till death, in this love of the Goſpel; Make not ſhipwrack in the havens. Thinke not now of any new way: Turne not to the world, for they care not for you: you ſtink to them, therefore hold to your old Maſter, and be his ſervants for ever: Let the Lord beate you out of his doores, before you dare ſtart from him: you have beene his ſo long, that as *Peter* ſaid, *Whither ſhould we goe* (Lord) *from thee? thou haſt the words of eternall life*. Though there be neither Calfe in the ſtall, nor Bullock in the heard: though the Olive caſt her fruit, and the Vine decay, yet God ſhall be your ſalvation. Though meanes faile, yet this ſpirit of grace in you, ſhall be a lively immortall ſtock in you, and preſerve you by faith, to the day of ſalvation. Theſe are times wherein ſinne abounds, it is the very houre of darkneſſe: Pray that as you have kept the Word of Gods patience all this while, ſo he would keepe you, though all the world ſhould be over-ſhadowed. And, although (perhaps) you take thought for your firſt edge, which is blunted by long continuance and cuſtome: yet ſo long as your metall holds good ſteele to the back, and you grow rooted, ſettled, and ſtable in all faith, love, and fruitfulneſſe, feare not, he that hath begunne, will perfect his worke; Faithfull is he who hath promiſed. To the worke of whoſe Grace I commend you: which is able to ſanctifie you throughout, and both to keep your bodies, ſoule, and ſpirits, pure and blameleſſe to his comming, through the Lord Jeſus; to whom with the Father and the Spirit, that immortall, inviſible, and onely wiſe God, be all honour and praiſe, for ever, *Amen*. *John* 6.68. *Habac.* 3.17.18. 1 *Pet.* 1.5. *Revel.* 3.10. *Epheſ.* 3.16,17. 1 *Theſ.* 5.24. 1 *Theſ.* 5.25. 1 *Tim.* 1.17.

FINIS.

AN APPENDIX, OR POST'SCRIPT TO THE READER.

AND thus (good Reader) thou haſt theſe Lectures penned to the uttermoſt wherein they were preached: And as I intēded to preach no more, ſo neither doe I purpoſe to trouble thee with more then I preached: The Verſes following to the twentieth, ſavour wholly of a ſpirit carried zealouſly towards God, whoſe mercy cured both *Naamans* body and ſoule: a draught whereof I gave thee in this laſt Lecture. I grant, there are ſome paſſages of obſcurity attending the words next to them I have handled: which ſome ſcrupulous Reader might thinke himſelfe wronged, if they ſhould wholly be unſaluted. Wherefore (to give a very ſhort touch of them) thus conceive of the ſeverals thereof.

THerefore take a bleſsing, &c. *But he ſaid*, As the Lord liveth] *Touching this Addition of his large gifts, to his large heart, I have already ſpoken of it in the ſervants arguments: and ſhewed there the duty of the people to their Miniſters. And we muſt know it did not abhorre from the* *Verſ.* 15. *end* 16.

2 Kings

custome of those times, either to offer or accept gratuities by the Prophets. But, touching his refusall, he was intimated from God, to reject it, and that with a solemne oath, by the life of God. Not that rash oaths are to be admitted, in every solemne or serious case of truth: But partly for the settling of Naamans spirit, that he might spare needlesse obtrusions, and partly, that he might know, it came from no distast in the Prophet, but it was God who barred it. And why? Doubtlesse the Lord would not that rewards comming from a Novice (whose strength was small, though his wealth great) nor any bruite thereof among Heathens (who must have heard of the fees, as well as the cure) should disparage and prejudice the grace and freedome of so miraculous a worke, as the conversion of a soule, and the healing of a Leper. And therefore he would have all such siniſter constructions to be dasht: Gods Prophets never stand in such deep needs, that God must be dishonoured by their supply. God scorned to be thought to send for Naaman, to possesse his Treasure, or enrich his Prophet: Teaching us, not to rake together boons and gifts from men, or advantages to our selves, counting all fish that comes to net: But wisely to lay things together, considering what our persons, the cause of God, the persons that give, either unable, or ungrounded, or any other circumstances may admit for the warranting or disabling of the receit. For some cases are too hot, and too heavy, to meddle with such matters, tending to a snare, and therefore let them perish rather then Religion should suffer thereby. This latitude of giving and receiving, is not easily restrained, where Wisdome and Discretion holds not the reine. And Naaman said, Shall there not then be given two Mules load of earth to thy servant? For thy servant will worship no other God, &c. A reply of Naaman to this refusall, with his reason: In the former, he seemes to speake thus, If thou onely aimest at my soules good, and not thine owne: hearken to my motion, of two Mules load of earth, (that is, so much as will serve me to worship upon) for I heare that God will onely be worshipped in his holy Land, or the bounds of his Church. This argued his weakneſſe: for God might bee worshipped by true Proselytes any where, though not in Sacrifices.

ſices. And, it was not ſo farre from Aram *to* Ieruſalem. *Wonder not therefore, if the Prophet yeelded not. For herein he ſhewed himſelfe a Novice, and no wonder: Young beginners muſt be hatcht up and encouraged. But, for the thing which is to be noted, it is this, That in ignorant beginners, there are many tolerable follies, and infirmities, inſeparably mixed, till better light and information ripen and rectifie them. There muſt be a time allotted for every thing, and the Diſciples of Chriſt while he lived with them, were extremely weake: Chriſt being in his humility, they were bare: but after when he came to his Crowne, he gawe them gifts abundantly. And we need not wonder if Popery after ſo long a ſoking in their dregges, are ſo ſtale and ſettled in their ſuperſtitions: when as, even at, and with the firſt onſet upon Religion, and creeping out of Paganiſme, this poore pilgrim here growes ſuperſtitious. When are we free from evill? Whiles drowned in prophaneneſſe, we are on the left hand, when brought to Religion, then a right-handed enemy invades us, Superſtition as a Canker breeding in the faireſt Apple of Devotion, to defile it Religion cannot quit us from danger. There is a white Devill as well as a blacke: Ignorance and weakneſſe being unable to avoyd many right-hand evils. Yet better (of the two) that our milke ſeeth a little over, then be eaten raw: although both would be ſhunned. What a world of ſcurffe brake into the Church of God after the firſt three hundred years ſince Chriſt? Perſecution ceaſing, and Chriſtianity (under* Conſtantine) *beginning to proſper, how did Satan (hedged out one way) creepe in worſe another? We ſay, Out of the aſhes of ſinne, ſinne may ſpring up. Out of thoſe aſhes of perſecution, aroſe undue honour to Martyrs, Orations, Sepulcres, Prayers to God at their Tombes, Cenſings, and the like, till Superſtition without a word, bred Idolatry againſt it, and laid a neſt egge for a world of Popiſh traſh to enſue upon it. The ſad iſſue of it this day, argues of what ſtamp it is. Let us labour therefore to keepe devotion within due bounds, leſt elſe ſhe which was at firſt legitimate, after breed baſtards for lack of knowledge. And ſo much for this.*

The other thing is his Reaſon, fetcht from the integrity of his heart, in point of the worſhip of his onely God, who had converted *Verſe* 17.

2 Kings

converted him, and no other. It is the same which is said in vers. 15. which gave occasion to the last Lecture, proceeding from the spirit of his cure. It is (as I have said) an instinct and inbred affection of all true converts, to clasp and cling wholly to the God of mercy, and to the truth of his worship, who hath accepted them to favour. And therefore the first reall consequent, and formall adjunct of his conversion, is wholly & for ever to ejure Idols. So that all defiled Schismatickes and Heretickes, Idolaters, justly question their true conversion. Into their counsell let not our soules come.

Vers. 18. In this the Lord be mercifull to thy servant, &c.] As he is resolved touching the last terme and object of his worship: so yet he sadly staggers about the circumstances. It hath long possessed the spirits of most men, that Naaman resolved upon the bowing before the Idoll, and craved pardon for it, as a gainfull sinne, and that which he was loath to forgoe. But they are much deceived. For the opening of his speech, consider there is somewhat in it good: somewhat doubtfull. That which was good was this, that out of a tender respect to preserve his purpose of sound worship, he smites first upon his chiefest feare, layes his hand upon the pained plat, and is most solicitous, for that sinne which had beene, was like to be most difficult and offensive in his way. This he takes most thought how to be rid of. Fire alway consumes that matter which most opposes it: so doth grace carry the soule with most jealousie, care and resolution against that sinne which hath been beloved'st, and th eatens greatest resistance to a repentant course. That which was doubtfull in his words, is this, That he desires to be pardoned in his bowing afterward (for so I take the words to import, not for time past:) but the opinion of most men concerning his resolution, is very uncharitable. He is now in his chiefe heat and zeale for God, therefore to come in with a dispensation for a thing, contrary to his vow (in some kind) were very absurd and unseasonable to imagine. But wee must conceive this verse to containe the pith of all that had passed betwixt him and Elisha; touching his complaint I take it thus therefore, that here is a fight in Naaman, viz. betwixt zeale on the one side, and ignorance, doubtfulnesse, and infirmity on the other. Having therefore

therefore (no doubt) debated with the Prophet, touching this great stumbling-block which was like to lye in his way, by his Masters leaning upon him before the Idoll, and the Lord (for the present) hiding from him the particular counsell, which he then needed: as a man not knowing what he should do at the instant, whether to abhorre such concurrence, enduring what ever should ensue, or correspond with his Master: he breaks out into this passionate speech, that if it must be so, that for avoiding of some inconveniences, till God did further reveale himselfe in that point, he must goe in and bow (which God knew how irksome it would be to his tender heart, and derogatory to God) that then the Lord would dispense with his weaknesse, and doubtfulnesse in that case, When I shall (saith he) goe in: he doth not affirme he will, much lesse hath he delight and resolution in it: but if God do not betweene this and that occasion, more fully resolve him, that then he would not strictly looke upon his act, but his intent. Neither is this new in Scripture in some cases, that God tolerates for a time, that which is not warrantable in case of a strait, as in the midwives lie to Pharaoh. If any shall object, that he should have renounced such a concurrence directly, and made no pause: I answer, Who doubts of the Rule, That in Gods matters no deliberation must be admitted (as that holy Martyr said:) But is this Rule so soone learned by heart, by a Novice which hath scarce time to conne his lesson? No doubtlesse, feare, and ignorance what should be done in a case so difficult, and so sudden, beset his sad heart, and forced this humble sute to the Prophet, that looke what hitherto was doubtfull, he would be his mouth to God, to resolve and satisfie his perplexed spirit in it when it should seeme best. This conclusion I suppose the Text may well beare, When I shall goe, that is, be urged to goe; When I shall bow, that is, be expected to bow: then in this, or about this, the Lord be mercifull to mee; that is, resolve mee beforehand, what I am to do; Whether to trust God for my place and office, more then feare the displeasure of the King; or to bow with him in the Temple, till further light and strength shall be revealed. All this, though it savour of such weaknesse and ignorance (as in a Novice, in a triall of such consequence is not strange) yet I deny, that it ought

to

2 Kings

to be construed to come from a spirit of meere base collusion and purpose to sinne against conscience. Now since the Text may admit such a construction, I demand, why ought it not? for it is a rule of interpretation, In doubtfull senses charity must oversway. And who knowes what light God might afford him, when he was gone from the Prophet? Sure it is by the Prophets farewell (Goe in peace) *that* Elisha *little doubted of it For to still his anxious mind he bids him so do. Touching the point of Æquivocation, I have handled it upon* vers. 13.

Goe in peace] q. d. *Let not this overmuch disquiet thy spirit, to hinder and dash thy joy and comfort in God. Possesse thy soule in peace: go not wilfully against thy light: nourish this thy tendernesse still; and that God who hath done the farre greater, will much more do the lesser for thee; either overpowring thy Master to release thee of this snare, or else strengthening thy timorous and weake spirit, to take leave, and to reject the shew of any Æquivocation, let whatsoever danger come thereof, that possibly may. So much for the Readers satisfaction, leaving my judgement to them that are wise. Enjoy this with the rest, and profit by all, repaying mee thy Prayers.*

FINIS.

Hirsch-Leyni 27.

UMI